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THE FEDERAL INFORMATION CENTER PROGRAM: BRINGING GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENS CLOSER TOGETHER

BY

CHARLES ARTHUR FLEMING

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

(Journalism)

at the

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

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PREFACE

The nature of a study such as this demands that one search for, investigate and illuminate whatever faults or shortcomings can be found, sometimes at the expense of the important things accomplished by an agency or program. An academic "critical analysis" emphasizes negative aspects over positive. Time and space do not permit discussing all that is good about the Federal Information Center program.

I am indebted to Professor Scott M. Cutlip, School of Journalism, University of Wisconsin, for suggesting the topic for this thesis, and for his encouragement and assistance.

It will become obvious that without the complete cooperation and assistance of people involved in the Federal Information Center program, this study would have been impossible. I am deeply indebted to Joan C. Riordan, General Services Administration coordinator for the program, for her advice and assistance. The cooperation and aid from all Federal Information Center personnel were exemplary--far more than one might expect under the circumstances. If there is one aspect of the Federal Information Center program which stands out as a significant asset it is the quality, sincerity, dedication and enthusiasm of the

people who make the program work. Indeed, their enthusiasm for the Federal Information Center program--what it does and what it could do--is contagious.

people who make the programs work. Indeed, their enthusiasm
for the Federal Depository Center program--from its genesis
and where it should go--is encouraging.

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INTRODUCTION

The Federal Information Center (FIC) program is a modest but noteworthy effort to improve two-way communication between the federal government and its citizens.

The program functions through government information offices or centers located in major cities. These centers receive citizen inquiries through face-to-face contact, mail and telephone, and respond with information. Although the centers provide information and pamphlets in direct response to inquiries, their primary function is to aid citizens in locating the appropriate federal agency and office which can provide the needed information or solve the citizen's problem, whatever it may be. For the most part, the centers provide "information on information."

The program began in 1966 to help citizens find their way among the maze of federal agencies to obtain information and assistance on the myriad federal regulations, programs and benefits.[1] From the opening of a pilot center in Atlanta, Georgia, the program has grown to where, in mid-1972, it serves 72 cities and almost 50 per cent of the U. S. population, receiving and responding to over four million citizen inquiries annually.[2]

On one hand, the program endeavors to bring within the reach of much of the population the numerous federal programs and services that affect citizens. It establishes a "federal presence" across the nation and attempts to humanize government by putting citizens in direct contact with a human representative. The program is an interface, a point of contact between citizens and government. It aids in explaining the maze of federal programs to citizens, it tells taxpayers what government is doing, and it provides a channel of communication from government to citizens in need of the information government possesses.

On the other hand, the program can be viewed as an effort to provide upward channels of communication--feedback--by which government may determine the information needs of citizens, levels of public understanding and awareness, and areas of misunderstanding and misinformation. "Feedback" is not a stated purpose of the FIC program, but it offers that capability.

Little is known of the program outside of the federal agencies involved and the cities served. Still, the program is a positive effort by government to create meaningful dialogue with citizens, and through communication and feedback the program attempts to bring government and citizens closer together.

Effective communication of any type is a difficult and complex task in our information-swamped society with its

competition for attention, myriad problems, social and technological "revolutions" and "explosions" of various types. Any communication program which attempts to penetrate the "noise" and confusion of society warrants study. But outward communication--communication from institutions to citizens--has become highly developed at the expense of input and feedback, despite the importance of feedback to the mass media, society's institutions and to government. Research emphasis in journalism and public relations substantiates this. There are those in business, industry, universities and certainly in government who do not yet fully appreciate the crucial interrelationship between an institution and its public environment, and the necessity for maintaining such a relationship through feedback as well as outward communication.

Nowhere in the government documents discussing the program is there reference to the FIC program as a "public relations" program of any type or by any similar title. Nevertheless, in the sense that the program is an effort to establish two-way communication, between an institution and its publics, it is literally an attempt to improve "public relationships."

It is my hypothesis that the FIC program provides effective channels of two-way communication between citizen and government.

My primary objective is to examine the difficult

problem of government-citizen communication and feedback. I propose to answer the following questions to support this objective: What is the role of communication and feedback in the contemporary government-citizen relationship? What are some of the efforts and concepts related to what the Federal Information Center program attempts to accomplish? How did the FIC program come about? How has it grown and what is its present configuration? How does it operate? What services does it perform? What types of inquiries do the centers receive? What federal agencies and programs are subjects of inquiries? To what extent are citizens' questions being satisfactorily answered by federal agencies involved in the program?

To accomplish these objectives, program officials and employees were interviewed by letter, telephone and in person, questionnaires were submitted to all information center directors, and a study was conducted at each of the centers.

The plan of this report is to first briefly discuss the need for such a communication program in the context of the contemporary environment, to mention significant antecedents and related concepts, and to discuss the origin, development, functioning and performance of the FIC program itself. The description of the program's performance includes a sample of citizen inquiries received through the program and responses of federal agencies to these inquiries.

"Ecology" according to Webster is the study of the relationships between an organism and its environment. An understanding of the environmental factors which contributed to the conception and development of the Federal Information Center program is prerequisite to understanding the relationships, or ecology, of the program to its environment. What the program does or attempts to do should be viewed in terms of the social and communication needs prompting it. As political scientist John Merriman Gaus pointed out, ". . . there is an explanation of the functions of government in the changes which take place in its environment. . . ."[3]

INTRODUCTION FOOTNOTES

[1]Irving Kator, "A New Concept in Service to the Public," Civil Service Journal (April-June 1967), p. 16.

[2]"Federal Information Centers Operated by the General Services Administration," 1972 fact sheet distributed by the General Services Administration, Washington, D. C., and "Federal Information Center Services," 1972 fact sheet distributed by the General Services Administration, Washington, D. C.

[3]John Merriman Gaus, Reflections on Public Administration (University, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1947), p. 5.

INTRODUCTION AND HISTORY

CHAPTER I

THE NEED

Complexity and Involvement of Government

Since the turn of the century, the size, scope and involvement of the federal government has grown in response to the demands and expectations of an increasingly complex, concerned and articulate society. Society has grown so complex and modern life so complicated that a large, powerful, pervasive government is a response essential to the smooth functioning of society. According to Daniel Bell in "Notes on the Post-Industrial Society":[1]

> We have become, for the first time, a national society . . . in which crucial decisions affecting all parts of the society simultaneously . . . are made by government, rather than through the market . . . .

Increasing interdependence between government and society has been accompanied by a confusing proliferation of federal agencies tasked with administering society: executive departments, independent agencies, commissions, boards, councils, authorities, wholly-owned corporations, mixed-ownership corporations, institutes, foundations, establishments, conferences, inter-governmental bodies, inter-agency committees, advisory committees, administrations, associations, and more.[2]

Functions and responsibilities of these bodies are not clearcut, but overlap, duplicate and even compete. For example, Senator Abraham Ribicoff pointed out in 1968 that there were eight cabinet departments and 12 agencies involved in health research and care, 18 agencies were attempting to improve the natural environment, eight departments and four agencies were operating major credit programs, 10 cabinet departments and more than 15 other agencies were involved in education, and 10 agencies and three departments were managing manpower programs.[3]

The Office of Education has no less than eight separate programs under six different laws authorizing grants to public libraries.[4] The 1969 Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance lists 581 domestic assistance programs administered by 47 federal agencies.[5] In 1966, Budget Director Charles L. Schultz estimated that there were 162 major grant programs under 399 separate authorizations or sub-categories of authorizations.[6]

Statistics on federal spending clearly indicate government's changing role in a society undergoing profound changes in concepts of health care, education and social services.

Federal expenditures for major social programs have tripled since 1961. Federal aid to state and local governments has quadrupled in the last decade. Expenditures for federal research has almost doubled in the same period.[7]

In 1950 the government spent one-third as much money on health as did private consumers. By 1969 the government was spending two-thirds as much as consumers on health.[8] By 1970 there were 6½ million people participating in federal food stamp programs at a cost of over half a billion dollars. Federal expenditures for public and private schools have more than quadrupled in the last decade while expenditures on work and training programs have doubled in only three years. In 1955, 12 per cent of the total capital and recurrent expenditure by all higher educational institutions was supplied by the federal government. By 1967 this had risen to 23 per cent, with 50 per cent predicted for 1975.[9] Veterans' benefits have doubled in the past decade; so have expenditures for social insurance. The cost of public assistance programs has grown from one billion dollars in 1950 to almost eight billion in 1970. Community action programs, Job Corps, VISTA, the Youth Corps, Head Start and related programs cost 10 million dollars between 1965-1970. For the 1973 budget, 118 billion dollars or about 46 per cent of the national budget is earmarked for social service programs.[10]

Government purchases of goods and services have risen from 38 billion dollars in 1950 to more than 220 billion in 1970. As a percentage of Gross National Product, federal expenditures for civilian programs (excluding interest on the national debt, veterans' benefits and the postal

service) have risen from less than one per cent in the 1920's to more than 10 per cent.[11]

To administer these programs and funds, the federal government employs over 316,000 civilians in Washington, D. C., and more than 2,600,000 civilians around the nation.

To further complicate public administration and citizen understanding, many federal social service programs flow to communities through the individual states, while others are operated directly by the federal government. Others bypass the states and flow directly to local public agencies. Some are operated with the federal government and the state as co-equal partners, or in partnership with local communities. Some are operated by joint federal-state-local organizations. Numerous federal, state, local and private agencies are involved in providing federally-funded services, cutting across established jurisdictional lines at all levels of government and society.[12]

This complexity and interdependence of federal, state and local governments and private institutions, coupled with increasing reliance on administration by grant and contract and greater use of multi-jurisdictional programs have added new problems to public administration and to the confusion of the citizen.[13] As Harold Seidman, Scholar-in-Residence at the National Academy of Public Administration, said:[14]

> What we are observing today are the strains and tensions inevitably produced by revolutionary changes in the federal government's role and its relationships to other levels of government, institutions of higher learning and other nonprofit institutions, and the private sector. Dividing lines have become increasingly blurred. It is no longer easy to determine where federal responsibilities end and those of state and local governments and private institutions begin.

Outside of Washington, governmental power is diffused among 50 states and over 80,000 local governments, including 3,000 counties, 18,000 municipalities, 17,000 townships, 21,000 school districts and 21,000 special districts.[15] Within a single city there may be layer upon layer of governments: federal, state, county, city, school district, sanitary district, fire district, water district, and more.

Faced with a similar complex situation, a Canadian study of government communication aptly pointed out that[16]

> It is a crucial paradox of the times that governments, in the interests of improving the personal welfare of the individual citizen, have grown so huge and complex that the individual is no longer able to feel that he personally matters to them.

Professor Scott M. Cutlip described the situation in similar terms:[17] "Government today, federal, state and local, is so complex and often so remote that citizens tend to become apathetic and bewildered."

Twenty-five years ago in the Report of the Commission on Freedom of the Press, legal scholar Zechariah Chafee, Jr., concluded that ". . . the citizen has just cause for complaint if he is left uninformed and baffled in

the face of a mysterious network of departments and bureaus clothed with vast powers over his property, work, recreations, and his very existence."[18]

More recently, political advisor and one-time Kennedy aide, Richard N. Goodwin, pointed to a lack of response by government to society's needs as a cause of society's malaise:[19]

> In almost every aspect of life, men are confronted by institutions and processes that seem unresponsive to their needs . . . a people suffering from institutions that can't respond, problems that are virtually left untouched, and the myriad uncertainties of their own private and public existence must inevitably rise in protest.

Professor Cutlip points to faulty communication as well as a lack of responsiveness by government as a major cause of society's ills:[20]

> A prime source of the bitter conflicts that beset our society are born in the lack of . . . lines of communication and in institutions that seem unresponsive . . . Today's citizen suffers a feeling of futility and frustration as he watches decisions being made for him by those beyond his reach. There appears to be a tenuous line of communication between the governors of our society and the governed. . . . As the impact and extent of government increases, the need for adequate communication between public official and citizen becomes more urgent. . . . the gulf between the citizen and his government tends to deepen as decision-making moves away from him. Centralization and concentration of government produces a vitiating sense of remoteness.

There are, of course, probably as many problems in society and as many causes of these problems as there are scholars and writers willing to enumerate them. Certainly faulty communication between and within institutions and elements of society is a major cause of a multitude of

problems. Communication from and to government may easily head the list. Large, complex modern government resembles a dinosaur in that the body may have outgrown the central nervous system.[21]

Government-Citizen Communication

Democratic government has an inherent obligation to create an informed public and to ensure the timely receipt of relevant information by intended audiences. As Hiebert and Spitzer said,[22] "In a democratic society there is no more important principle than the people's right to know about their government and its obligation to keep people informed." The transmission of information between government and its citizens is the duty of government and the right of its citizens.

Without effective information and communication, neither modern society nor modern government can function efficiently. Information, its communication and use, is the web of society; it is the basis for all human understanding, organization and effort.[23] To live effectively is to live with adequate information.[24] According to mathematician Norbert Wiener, information is the content of what is exchanged with the outer world as people adjust to it, and make this adjustment felt upon it.[25] Without relevant, timely government information, citizens are unable to make proper choices in the conduct of their lives and affairs. Without government information, they may be unable

to avail themselves of the myriad government services and programs to which they are entitled, and they may be unable to comprehend the complexities and functions of their government. As the Canadian Task Force on Government Information pointed out:[26]

> The keystone of our modern social structure, our society of interdependence, is that the information generated by each /government and people/ is required by the other.

In order to maintain our complex society and a government based on the consent and participation of the governed, there must be an effective, efficient, planned, relevant flow of vital information between government and its citizens. At least three functions of this information flow can be identified.

One major function of modern government is to produce information for the benefit of its citizens. The government assembles a vast amount of data useful to the public which should be made available to potential users. Many government programs are established for the sole purpose of developing knowledge through research and experience to produce a better society. Without communicating this knowledge to the people, such efforts would be worthless and society would be worse off.[27]

Second, a democratic government has an obligation to ensure that its citizens derive maximum benefit from government services and programs. Taxpayers must realize

that they are getting their money's worth back from the government. Potential recipients of economic, social and medical programs must know what is theirs and how to avail themselves of the services. Public monies are used to provide these myriad services; it is sound economics--and sound democracy--that the programs reach the intended recipients and benefit them in the manner intended. Information is critical in achieving these goals.[28]

A third aspect of government-citizen communication is the need to build public trust in the government. Through effective communication, citizens will understand the social value of federally sponsored programs, and the role of the federal government in state and locally administered programs. There is a need from government's point of view to create an informed public who knows, understands and supports the government's efforts. Citizens have both a need to know and a need to understand. Understanding is prerequisite to cooperation. As Professor Cutlip says:[29]

> The nature of government requires that those who make the rules and provide the services must communicate with those who are affected by the rules and those who should get the services. Enforcement of a public health law requires public understanding and support of its purpose. Promotion of soil conservation requires an understanding of its benefits and techniques by landowners if they are to cooperate . . . .

As a citizen comes to understand public authority and the benefits and services provided by that authority he comes to regard government as something not totally alien

to himself, but something working for the good of society, something for which he may become responsible, and may participate in. As Chafee said,[30]

> An intelligent information service can bridge the "we" versus "they" gulf . . . it can bring the daily work of officials before our eyes and ears so that we realize it is an essential part of our own work.

People will become more dependent on communications systems and on the institutions operating them as those systems play a greater, more important role in their daily lives.

It is not enough that information merely be made available by government and transmitted blindly toward the audience. Society is experiencing an "information explosion" or "communication overload" whereby competition for attention too often keeps people from knowing about what they should. More and more information is becoming available on more and more subjects; more channels of communication are becoming available; and more points of access to this information and channels are developing. Under this deluge, there is a danger that people will become more insensitive to communications directed at them. Certainly people must become more discriminating about the messages they permit to penetrate their defenses. Norbert Wiener pointed out that communication ". . . is a joint game by the talker and the listener against the forces of confusion."[31]

Information must first be produced. It must then be effectively transmitted in a manner understandable by the

intended recipients. To reach the receiver through the "noise" of an information-flooded society, the message must be relevant to the audience and effectively "targeted." There must be channels of communication appropriate to the message and the audience and there must be facilities or points of contact for the message to get across. Without these prerequisites any communication program is doomed regardless of the quantity or quality of information. Professor Cutlip says:[32]

> Any public enterprise . . . to prosper and endure, must . . . find ways and means of communication with unseen, remote publics over lines lengthened and distended by physical distance and psychological difference, and complicated by multiplying barriers to communication.

Successful government-citizen communication is extremely difficult and complex despite government's estimated 6,144 full-time public relations personnel, yearly expenditures of about $165 million for this function, and almost 60 major agency information programs operating through the mass media funnel.[33] Much government information simply does not reach the people for whom it was intended. Cutlip says:[34]

> We have moved in some seven decades to a society of separateness and abrasiveness. This has made the communication task increasingly difficult. . . . Today we are confronted by a paradox--unparalleled facilities but increasing difficulty and complexity in communication. Man can send televised pictures from the moon to the . . . earth, but cannot communicate across neighborhood . . . boundaries.

More specifically, Gabriel A. Almond concluded that[35]

> A discriminating analysis of the evidence suggests that

> a large sector of the lower-income, poorly educated majority of the population is incapable of assimilating the materials of informational campaigns.

A few years ago, a Health, Education and Welfare Department official spent three days living in the poverty area in Baltimore and reported,[36]

> Judging by observation and conversation with health and welfare clients--confirmed by workers--publications, newspapers, radio and television do not reach the Baltimore poor. Word-of-mouth from a neighbor, minister, or block leader is the common channel.

Government, Cutlip says, places too much stress on formalized communication and not enough on actual face-to-face communication.[37]

That faulty communication prompts problems in access to government social services was underscored by a 1966 Columbia University School of Social Work study:[38]

> The recognition that many services had become "hard to reach," that some services "disengaged" themselves from the poor, that, in general, modern, large, specialized and bureaucratized institutions inevitably confront complex problems when they seek to render individualized and sensitive services have made these /information/ functions respectable again.

The proceedings of the XIIIth International Conference of Social Work in 1966 further emphasized that[39]

> . . . there is the very real difficulty of making the services accessible and persuading the intended beneficiaries to utilize them . . . If the people cannot be reached and helped, the efforts are useless.

Besides his conclusion that we have become, for the first time, a national society, Daniel Bell went on to say that[40] ". . . in addition, we have become a communal society, in which many more groups now seek to establish

their social rights--their claims on society--through the political order; . . ." Certainly the communication "explosion" has contributed to the increasing rate of diffusion of social demands, and has helped prompt a viewpoint among contemporary legal scholars that[41]

> The new expectations progressively brought into existence by the welfare state must be thought of not as privileges to be dispensed unequally or by arbitrary fiat of government officials but as substantial rights in the assertion of which the claimant is entitled to an effective remedy, a fair procedure and a reasoned decision.

The difficulty in government-citizen communication, particularly with reference to federal social service programs, has been noted by the nation's chief executives.

President Johnson pointed out in his 1965 Commencement Address at Howard University that "It is not enough just to open the gates of opportunity. All our citizens must have the ability to walk through the gates."[42] More recently, President Nixon touched on a related aspect of the problem:[43]

> In recent years the Federal Government has suffered a precipitous decline in public confidence. The reason can be found in the chronic gap that exists between the publicity and promise attendant to the launching of a new Federal program--and that program's eventual performance. If confidence in government is to be restored, the gap must be closed. This is the great goal of this Administration . . . to devise new approaches, to make the worthy old programs work, and to make old institutions responsive.

Thus, in this complex social environment, it is increasingly important that government make special effort to communicate into the less obvious recesses of society,

that it avoid neglecting certain interests and needs, and that it always remain cognizant of those citizens who might remain outside of the communication circuit. Government has an obligation to communicate to its citizens and it must accomplish this enormous task over complicated, overloaded communication channels, through the "noise" of society, with relevant, easily-understood messages. Without such communication, government is not fulfilling its obligations and citizens are deprived of their rights and entitlements. But even with such communication, only half of the problem has been solved.

Citizen-Government Communication

The effectiveness of government and government-citizen communication depends not only on the accuracy, relevance and penetrability of information sent out, but also on the extent to which government responds to the people's needs. As the Canadian Task Force on Government Information emphasized,[44]

> The information that the government gives to the people must be relevant to what the people require in order to be bright and critical and constructive in affairs of state; the information that people give to the government must be relevant to what the government requires in order to do what the people want done.

James Madison himself said, "A popular government without popular information or the means of acquiring it, is but a prologue to a farce, or a tragedy, or perhaps both."[45] In the Report of the Commission on Freedom of the

Press, legal scholar Chafee described the problem this way:[46]

> . . . it is evident that government must itself talk and write and even listen. The subject has become important with the increase of government functions and in the number of officials, accompanied by a growing popular ignorance and bewilderment as to what these officials are doing. One of our members described the situation: "The fact that, with the passage of years, the government itself has become an even greater participant in social and economic affairs has created a necessity for better intercommunication between it and the public in the interests of both."

Mathematician Norbert Wiener coined the term "cybernetics" (from the Greek "Kybernetes" meaning "steersman") and applied it to human behavior and communication. In the social sense, cybernetics is the study of communication and control of phenomena at every level of a system. The essence of the theory is that[47]

> . . . self-government is achieved by the fact that information about the system's behavior is fed-back to the system, the latter readjusting its behavior in the light of the new information received.

A cybernetic system consists of three minimum components: the detector or sensor that receives information concerning the state of the goal to be controlled, the governor which makes decisions about the steering of the system on the basis of information received from the sensor, and the effector that executes the decisions.

Wiener's theory is applicable to government and society. Initially, government makes decisions about goals and strategies for their achievement. As the strategies are applied, information about their effectiveness is

fed-back through staff or intelligence departments (sensors) to decision-makers (governors) and new decisions are made, strategies or goals are modified and executed (by effectors). At all levels of the organization similar loops of feedback operate. Thus, society and government may be seen as a system of loops within loops or as a hierarchy of interlocking loops at the bottom of which the loops become smaller and more numerous.[48]

According to Wiener,[49]

> . . . effective behavior must be informed by some sort of feedback process, telling it whether it has equalled its goal or fallen short . . . feedback is a method of controlling a system by reinserting into it the results of its past performance.

For there to be true communication, Wiener says, the sender must take cognizance of any messages from the receiver which may indicate that the sender's message is understood.[50] Without such feedback, the sender will be in doubt as to whether he has in fact communicated. Feedback produces a closed communication system. It fosters interdependence between sender and receiver in that each is cause and effect of the other's condition.[51] It brings sender and receiver psychologically closer together.

Leavitt and Mueller's laboratory studies on feedback and communication found that feedback increases the accuracy with which information is transmitted and it increases sender-receiver confidence in what is being mutually accomplished. A lack of feedback engenders doubt in the sender

and provokes hostility in the receiver that is perceptible only when the situation changes from zero feedback to free feedback.[52]

Putting this theory to practical application, Hiebert and Spitzer define government public information as[53]

> . . . involving both parties, sender and receiver, in the communication process. It means relating one to the other, to the extent that one changes and shapes the other, in a constant and mutual act.

William Ruder, former Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs, Department of Commerce, said:[54]

> . . . it /feedback/ provides a new basis for program assessment, for understanding current needs, for determining future action, for clearing up misunderstandings and misinformation, for identifying and predicting future roadblocks, for creating escape valves for blowing off steam, for achieving public commitment to objectives, and for creating a momentum through which the public can make a contribution to programming.

Feedback consists of two types. The first is unintentional or non-purposive feedback,[55] discerned by government on the basis of citizen requests for information, citizen questions, and citizen participation in programs and services. It can indicate public reaction to what is being done and what is not being done; it can indicate information and knowledge levels within the populace; it can indicate what people are asking about and not asking about, what they are taking advantage of and not taking advantage of, and what they are or are not doing. It can indicate how aware people are of federal information services designed to inform citizens of programs and

benefits, how successful these services are, to what extent information is needed by citizens, and how effective existing communication channels are.

The second type is purposive feedback whereby government actively solicits input from citizens and provides upward channels for suggestions, complaints and opinions. The Canadian Task Force on Government Information pointed out:[56] "Since governments are inevitably increasing their effect on the day-to-day lives of citizens, it follows that the citizens should be able to increase their say in what their governments do." Chafee described the role of purposive feedback in these words:[57]

> Modern laws touch men's lives at many points and are not likely to work unless carefully shaped to fit the intricacies of business and other human activities which lie somewhat outside the experience of lawmakers, and unless some substantial cooperation is given by the men whose activities the law seeks to change. On such questions, the thoughts and emotions of citizens potentially concerned are an essential part of the law-making process.

On the one hand, citizens have a need and a right in a democratic society to communicate with government and express their views, opinions and complaints. Dahl's Principle of Affected Interests says everyone who is affected by the decisions of a government should have the right to participate in that government.[58] The "information explosion" has contributed to the "noise" in society, but it has also expanded the information environment and interests of society's members. People are becoming more

aware of what the government can and should do and the diffusion of demands for government information and services has been rapid.

On the other hand, government has an obligation to listen to its citizens.

> Millions of Americans view government as distant and unresponsive, if not hostile . . . dehumanized government derives from the impersonality of modern mass society . . . there is a need in today's large and complex government for mechanisms devoted solely to receiving, examining, and channeling citizens' complaints and securing expeditious and impartial redress.[59]

Without adequate attention to the necessity for feedback, there is

> The danger . . . that governments will continue to engage so few citizens in relevant consultations over the problems of their country that the disaffected, the alienated, the apathetic and the politically ignorant will relentlessly increase their numbers.[60]

Without feedback, it is impossible for democratic government to respond to the needs and demands of its citizens. But even with feedback, failure to recognize it or respond to it can increase the citizen-government gap and can lead to a breakdown in the communication system--if not the entire democratic process. The Canadian Task Force on Government Information explained:[61]

> What makes the idea of feedback dynamic and effective is the ability to adjust to changing conditions . . . For democracy to work it must possess a certain dynamic element to enable it to adjust to social change. The very forms of democracy are involved in change, and neither the political framework nor the information function is a static system. We live in a period of rapid and acute social change. . . .

John Diebold put it this way: "Vitality and survival are determined by the ability of the organization to perceive and fulfill these now rapidly changing human needs."[62] The ability of modern government to respond to the social demands and needs of its citizens as discerned through feedback should be a hallmark of modern democracy.

> To produce results and restore citizen confidence in their public institutions, our governmental system should be made flexible so it may respond to the diverse needs of different localities and different groups within our population.[63]

Political advisor Goodwin put it this way:[64] "The sense of powerlessness /in society/ is . . . greatly aggravated by the failure of our institutions and our social processes to respond to more specific /social/ ills."

Feedback and appropriate response to feedback completes the government-citizen two-way communication cycle.

The Problem in Brief

The need for effective government-citizen two-way communication is apparent. Modern government is becoming increasingly involved in every activity of society. Government is growing larger, more complex, and more confusing to the citizen. There are serious problems in society; a major one is the growing gap between governors and governed. This and other problems can be attributed to faulty communication. Communication and information is critical to the smooth functioning of democratic society. Government has,

on the one hand, an obligation to communicate to its citizens; and citizens, on the other, have a right to information produced by government. But the "information explosion" and "noise" in society make communication difficult. Messages from government do not reach all citizens, depriving some of information, services and benefits to which they are entitled. At the same time, government is obligated to elicit, receive and respond to feedback from citizens in order to maintain the dynamic, responsive relationship between government and citizens necessary to democratic society.

To meet these needs, government requires adequate and appropriate channels for two-way communication with citizens. It requires facilities for this communication--points of reference, interaction mechanisms, or a government-citizen "interface" to establish viable communication circuits.

The 1966 Columbia University School of Social Work study very adequately summarized the need in these terms:[65]

- People are excessively estranged (or alienated) from government and governmental processes;

- All but the best educated are uninformed about available public and private resources, facilities, rights and programs;

- Government policy-makers and planners do not have adequate access to information about the needs, problems

and best ways to reach those whom they would serve;

- There are inadequate complaint and appeal channels; and,

- Specialization, dispersion of authority and legislative inconsistency make service bureaucracies very complex; the individual in need of service can find his way through the maze only with the help of generally unavailable expert guidance.

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CHAPTER II

RELATED ENDEAVORS AND CONCEPTS

General

The problem of citizen-government communication in an increasingly complex social environment has received considerable attention over the years and around the world. A variety of related endeavors and concepts have been tried, with varying success. It is beyond the scope of this paper to catalog these efforts, but it is appropriate to mention a few closely related to the Federal Information Center program. Some of these concepts may have led to the thinking and proposals that resulted in the FIC program. Others are parallel attempts to accomplish something akin to what the FIC program attempts, and provide interesting comparisons.

The Ombudsman

Perhaps the most widespread related concept, at least in terms of worldwide interest, is the "ombudsman" idea. An "ombudsman," according to Cutlip is[1] ". . . an independent, high-level officer who receives complaints, pursues inquiries without regard to channels, and recommends suitable action." Three essential features of the ombudsman

Chapter 12

Appendix and Bibliography

General

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an [illegible] for [illegible] and [illegible] the [illegible] a variety of [illegible] and [illegible] that [illegible] value [illegible]. It is hoped the [illegible] this paper to provide [illegible] that it is [illegible] to [illegible] a [illegible] to the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

concept are that the ombudsman[2]

> . . . is an independent and non-partisan officer of the legislature, usually provided for in the constitution, who supervises the administration;
>
> he deals with specific complaints from the public against administrative injustice and maladministration; and
>
> he has the power to investigate, criticize and publicize, but not to reverse, administrative action.

The concept originated in Sweden in the early 19th Century and quickly spread to Finland. Denmark adopted the concept in 1955 and from there it moved to Norway and New Zealand. Programs of a similar type operate in West Germany, the Philippines, the United States, Great Britain and Canada. Ireland, Austria, India, Malaysia, Jamaica, Australia, the Netherlands--and others--have considered such programs.[3]

In the United States, much interest has been shown in the ombudsman concept, especially during the 1966-1967 period. According to political scientist Donald C. Rowat, "The most remarkable burgeoning of interest in Ombudsmanship has occurred in the United States. Indeed, one might almost call it 'Ombudsmania.'"[4]

The first governmental ombudsman program in the United States was established by Nassau County, New York, on May 31, 1966, under the title of Public Protector to ". . . protect the public and individual citizens against inefficiency, maladministration, arrogance, abuse and other failures of government."[5] Hawaii enacted an Ombudsman Bill

on April 30, 1967. According to Rowat, similar plans have been proposed in over half the states. A variety of ombudsman plans under a variety of names exist at the city level, at universities and colleges, newspapers and other agencies which either serve the public or act on behalf of the public.[6]

Proposals have been made at the national level, but without success. In March 1967 Senator Edward V. Long introduced a bill to create an Administrative Ombudsman for the United States, with jurisdiction over the Social Security Administration and Veterans Administration. At about the same time, Senators Magnuson and Long introduced a bill for a Tax Ombudsman to create regional tax ombudsmen within the Tax Court to decide appeals on small tax claims. Wisconsin's Congressman Henry S. Reuss proposed a federal Ombudsman Bill in 1963, 1965 and 1967 for an agency to assist legislators in their efforts on behalf of citizens.

Rowat points to the ". . . magnitude of problems encountered at the federal level . . ." as the reason why the concept has had no success.[8] In particular, he identified the difficulty in trying to preserve the precise meaning of the ombudsman concept and the difficulty in preventing the ombudsman from becoming an arm of the executive branch as major obstacles.[9]

The Final Report of the Thirty-Second American Assembly, Columbia University, recommended establishment of

a national ombudsman for the United States.[10] In a paper prepared for the Assembly, political scientist William B. Gwyn said that opposition to the concept in the United States is based on beliefs that the number of complaints would be too great for one office to handle, that the institution would violate principles of federalism and the separation of powers, that the President would have too much control over the ombudsman, that the ombudsman would become a partisan figure, and that such an official would infringe on legislators' traditional roles of advocacy on behalf of citizens.[11]

The essence of the ombudsman concept is that it provides citizens a direct line of communication to an official with authority to act on their complaints. It establishes communication between citizens and government, especially for feedback. Although the concept emphasizes action on behalf of citizen complaints, response to complaints, misinformation and injustice also includes providing government information on programs, regulations and services affecting citizens. It aids citizens in finding their way among the maze of government officials, agencies and programs.

Great Britain's Citizens' Advice Bureaus

A national ombudsman plan for Great Britain was first proposed in 1962 and finally adopted in March 1967. The official holding the ombudsman office has the title of

Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration. A significant difference between Great Britain's plan and that of other countries is that citizens may not complain direct to the Parliamentary Commissioner, but he must wait for complaints to be referred to him from Parliament, and he reports back to Parliament rather than to the complainants. He is also limited in the matters over which he may have jurisdiction.[12] These restrictions to some extent may be due to[13]

> . . . the obviously strong tradition which insists that even a twentieth-century House of Commons is still the Grand Inquest of the Nation, and second, the immense social respectability of the British civil service.

But Great Britain has another nationwide program which performs a semi-ombudsman function as well as other functions similar to those of the U. S. Federal Information Center Program.

Great Britain's Citizens' Advice Bureaus (CAB) were established shortly after the beginning of World War II to aid citizens with the problems and chaos of wartime England. After the war, the bureaus remained an essential part of the community scene; by 1966 almost 500 such bureaus were in operation, processing over 1,000,000 citizen inquiries annually--inquiries for information, advice and assistance.[14]

The purpose of the CAB program is to[15]

> . . . make available to the individual accurate information and skilled advice on the many problems that

> arise in everyday life; to explain legislation; to help the citizen to benefit from and use wisely the services provided to him by the state.

Bureaus are staffed by both volunteers and professionals on an overall ratio of seven volunteers to three professionals, but with much variation among bureaus. Greater London's 70 bureaus, for example, are almost entirely professionally staffed, and a staff may vary from six to 36 people.[16]

The bureaus are locally established and operated, sponsored by local communities and neighborhoods. Funding is accomplished primarily by local government grants under Britain's 1948 Local Government Act.

The bureaus perform a variety of functions. They provide a wide range of information, they listen to personal problems and offer sympathy and emotional support, they make home visits when people are unable to visit the bureaus, they fill out forms and applications, write letters for citizens, make referrals to both public and voluntary agencies, and to lawyers and doctors as well. Their range of services covers social security benefits to consumer rights, landlord-tenant disputes to personal problems. The bureaus emphasize personal visits over telephone inquiries and they encourage inquirers to help themselves, although they will write letters, fill out forms, make appointments and telephone calls on behalf of citizens if necessary.[17]

The bureaus give both information and advice, and serve an ombudsman function in that they will give advice and help to a person who may have been treated unfairly by some agency of government. In addition, bureaus sell or distribute free a variety of literature, both national and local.

To perform these functions, the bureaus maintain directories of local public and voluntary agencies and services, and are provided with comprehensive directories of social legislation, regulations and detailed instructions on how to apply these laws and rules to individual citizen problems.

A National CAB Council associated with the British National Council of Social Service provides local bureaus with the bulk of their information and continually updates bureau holdings through a steady stream of notes and circulars. The National Council also provides training, operating guidelines and literature.

In 1965 the bureaus received and processed over one million citizen inquiries. Almost one-fourth of these were concerned with family and personal problems, one-fourth with requests for civic, local and national information, and one-fourth with property and real estate matters. The remaining inquiries, in descending order by volume, dealt with trade and manufacturing, employment, health and medical services, insurance, education and training,

communication and travel, and veterans' benefits. About 60 per cent of the inquiries handled by the bureaus are resolved by merely giving information, while the remainder require some further action. Most users of a CAB's services are reported to be lower middle class and working class people.[18]

Feedback to the national council is an important CAB function. According to one study of the program,[19]

> Through their day-to-day contact with a wide section of the population, they acquire a unique range of knowledge of community and individual problems and the adequacy of services. . . . The data collected from the CAB's by the National Council are valuable for appraising the quality and adequacy of services, for considering the need for new legislation or for developing changes of procedure or administration. These data are extensively used.

The bureaus record all inquiries received, categorize them within ten major categories, and each month forward this data to the National Council. These records then become ". . . a source of impartial evidence for those studying the needs and problems of the British citizen and the adequacy of services designed to help him."[20] In general, however, the National Council responds to specific government inquiries for feedback information, rather than continuously monitoring and reporting.

The CAB feedback function has apparently been useful to government and citizens. According to Alfred J. Kahn's study,[21]

> CAB material has contributed to the passage of legislation on rent and housing, on legal aid and the

> protection of the consumer. . . . In addition to giving evidence, CAB's are available as field stations to try out new governmental forms or procedures or to advise on their development. They are thus sources of feedback and channels in two-way communication between bureaucratic government and the man in the street.

The CAB's provide information, advice, referral, personal help and emotional support, limited advocacy and valuable feedback. They do this, according to Kahn, through an open-door atmosphere, the expertise of the workers, a wide range of information and services, service to all social classes, confidentiality, nonpartisan and nonsectarian service, and unbiased evaluation of needs and recommendation of services.[22]

A criticism of the program is that the bureaus lack a follow-up capability in that they have no way of evaluating the quality of service provided the citizen unless the citizen makes a return visit.

Certainly much of the success enjoyed by the bureaus can be attributed to the length of time they have been on the British scene and their wartime operation would tend to relieve any hesitancy or stigma associated with visiting the bureaus and asking for help. Although the bureaus are locally organized and operated, they do act as an outlet for government information, especially concerning social services, agencies and legislation. Aside from their primary social welfare functions, they do aid citizens in finding their way among the maze of government agencies and services, and perform a valuable feedback

function for the central government. They are channels and facilities for two-way government-citizen communication.

Canada's Information Canada Centers

Canada, like Great Britain, has social service and information centers of various types on the provincial and the community level. It has, in addition, a far more ambitious program as far as dissemination of government information is concerned--a program that more closely approximates the Federal Information Center program than does Britain's Citizens' Advice Bureaus.

In September 1968, Canada's Institute for Behavioral Research at York University conducted an opinion survey of Canadian adults and found that about 10 per cent of those polled were totally unaware of the division of responsibilities between federal and local governments--even on matters such as foreign policy--and another 43 per cent of the people were very poorly informed. Almost two-thirds of the people felt that "when you walk into a government office, you just become a number." Over half of those polled said "public officials do not care what people like me think." Large segments of the population were unaware of government services available to them and over half the people wanted more information from government.[23]

Only days before this survey was initiated, the Canadian government appointed a Task Force on Government Information to conduct a study--the fifth in ten years--of

government agencies and programs designed to publicize the government's services and to suggest how the government-citizen gap might be narrowed.[24]

The Task Force was charged with recommending improvements in coordination of federal information, in methods to ensure effective diffusion of information, and in methods for listening to the concerns and needs of the people.

In November 1969 the Task Force submitted a two-volume report with 200 recommendations. In its report, the Task Force explained:[25]

> Government has an obligation to provide full, objective and timely information; and that the citizens have a right to such information . . .
>
> . . . one of the major limitations on citizens' access to government information is their ignorance of where to get it. Even government employees themselves frequently have difficulty in locating sources of official information . . .
>
> Its effectiveness /government/ depends not only on the accuracy of the information it sends out, but also on the extent to which it responds to the information needs of the people.

Based on these philosophies, the Task Force recommended that a federal agency, Information Canada, be established, and that this agency include a government "referral center" consisting of an "enquiry service" to answer citizen inquiries, an "indexing unit" to compile and make available to distribution points information on government organization, functions and programs, and a "unit for the proper direction of the mail" to respond to

mail inquiries.[26]

Information Canada was born April 1, 1970, with four primary functions: to initiate information programs, coordinate major federal information programs, service and advise federal departments and to aid the government in listening to citizens. It had three primary branches: Planning, Information-Out and Information-In.[27]

Among other things, Information-In was tasked with obtaining, analyzing and reporting feedback from the public and with providing information to citizens through "enquiry centers." Even before the official beginning of Information Canada, the first of these inquiry centers was established in Ottawa in November 1969 as the cornerstone for a nationwide network. A second center was established in Winnipeg in April 1971 and centers in Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver and Halifax are planned to open by the end of 1972. Five additional centers, as yet unlocated, are scheduled to be in operation by the end of 1973 for a total of 11.[28]

The basic role of the inquiry centers was explained in a Canadian Cabinet document which, based on Task Force recommendations, charged Information Canada with operating[29]

> . . . national and regional enquiry centers where the public could write, phone or visit to ask questions or to make comments on government programs and policy. The centers would provide general information requested, or ensure prompt and accurate direction of enquiries to

departments to free the public from the frustrations of the bureaucratic labyrinth.

The inquiry centers were initially established adjacent to but administered separately from government bookstores. Realizing that the information functions of these two offices overlap, require coordination, and the necessity for "cross-fertilization" of information, the government combined inquiry centers and bookstores into Information Canada Centers in March 1972 under the Enquiries Division of Information-In.[30] The Queen's Printer for Canada, equivalent of the U. S. Government Printing Office, publishes 17 annual catalogs of government publications with about 60,000 titles.[31] Total staff for these centers, including inquiry and booksales functions, varies from five to seven personnel for a small center to 25 to 30 for a large one.

The Canadian government believes these centers accomplish important objectives on three levels. For the government as a whole, the centers are a permanent physical and psychological presence of the federal entity across Canada, they stimulate interest in federal affairs and promote and disseminate government information. For individual agencies, the centers are a point of contact, an interface, with the public, they are outlets for distribution of agency information and they are indicators of public interest and reaction to agency programs and

services. For the general public the centers are a focus for information on government programs and services, a "listening post" for public comments, complaints and suggestions, and a forum for discussion and activities leading to better citizen-government dialogue and understanding.[32]

The centers are specifically tasked with answering or referring to the proper agency all inquiries related to federal programs, services and activities, with recording and reporting feedback, planning and conducting advertising programs to describe inquiry and feedback functions, serving as a primary government information resource for the community, maintaining liaison with federal, local government and private agencies to develop a more complete cross-referral and information network, and with operating government bookstores.[33]

Center personnel undergo four weeks of intensive training and apprenticeship before becoming "information officers," and are required to be proficient in both inquiry and booksales functions. Center personnel provide information to the public on programs and activities of the federal government and on government publications, they compile statistics on inquiries and publications sold, they analyze trends in the nature of inquiries and identify information gaps, they study publication demands with a view toward changing inventories, they develop contacts and

information sources for incorporation into regional or national information banks, identify and report on feedback, advise inquirers of other (provincial, city, etc.) information sources and maintain information on the status of proposed and pending federal legislation.[34]

The centers use an information retrieval system based on a printed index of government departments by program and activity. This breakdown is published on computer-formatted sheets, using the Key Word in Context (KWIC) arrangement. The index, with a one-line entry, tells center personnel the level of government involved, name of department or agency involved, keywords describing the program and each activity of the program, description of the major facets of the activity, the public to whom the activity is aimed and geographical location of the activity. Each index entry refers to a "contact book" entry which identifies the activities in more detail and indicates the federal official and telephone number from whom further information may be obtained, plus the document serving as the source of the information. Directories are updated as changes occur and by monthly printed changes from the central (Ottawa) office.[35]

Officials express the philosophy that federal information services should not be limited to the population adjacent to a given center, but that the total information network will eventually include sub-centers, terminal posts,

mobile offices and other remote points of access.

Centers are physically and operationally separate from provincial and city information centers. Information Canada Centers are charged with answering queries on federal or federal-related matters only; non-federal inquiries are referred to other sources.

Feedback has been an important function of the program from the beginning. According to the Assistant Chief, Enquiries Division,[36]

> . . . the public can use us as a channel through which to forward comments, complaints or suggestions on federal government programs and activities. Feedback recorded at our centres is immediately forwarded to the appropriate ministerial or departmental authority, as well as to the Member of Parliament for the constituency in which the commenting citizen resides. Feedback is then itemized and forwarded to the House of Commons on a monthly basis.
>
> Internally, we view even enquiries as an indirect form of feedback. That is, we attempt through analysis of queries received, to identify gaps in the existing information resources of the government and to fill those gaps by conducting the necessary research. The results of the research would then be incorporated into our information retrieval system.

Questions which require value judgments on personal, commercial or political matters are not handled by the centers except that they are referred to the appropriate private or public agency, Member of Parliament, political party, Better Business Bureau, etc., which can provide the answer.[37]

Center personnel are encouraged to maintain close liaison with their communities and to participate in a

variety of community functions to make people more aware of the functions of the centers, to make them more aware of government services and benefits, and to further Information Canada's basic philosophy of government-citizen dialogue.

The centers and their functions are further advertised through a program of summer exhibits and by pamphlets. The summer 1971-1972 "Informa" exhibit program, for example, included setting up miniature Information Canada Centers complete with free publications and information request cards ". . . intended to acquaint the 'man on the street' with the federal 'fact'--to explain the Federal system, to delineate its functions, to show its value . . ."[38]

Additional publicity is obtained through the mass media; but, as the Assistant Chief, Enquiries Division, explained,[39]

> Advertising to broaden the public's awareness of the enquiries service has followed no particular strategem, beyond the pre- and post-publicity organized for the official opening of individual centres. The media have spontaneously given wide coverage to the agency as a whole. Such publicity is of course uncontrolled and cannot ensure correct representation of our raison d'etre nor in some instances has it projected a very encouraging image to the public. Nonetheless, informal contacts at the regional level with media representatives and community groups have resulted in considerable advertising mileage.

Effectiveness of the program is measured by analysis of inquiry statistics, periodic surveys of inquiries and monitoring through spot-checking the quality of replies given, and operational audits by government consultants. Officials report that effectiveness is

enhanced by conferences and seminars within centers and nationally.

Information Canada is an ambitious effort to coordinate, consolidate and execute government information programs, not only to explain and sometimes justify government's activities, but also to aid citizens in understanding government and to aid citizens in availing themselves of government services, and to aid government in listening to the people. It is a new program and a controversial one.

On the American scene, perhaps the closest resemblance to what Information Canada hopes to achieve can be found in the New Deal domestic information network of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

FDR's New Deal Agencies

Franklin Delano Roosevelt's programs to combat the Depression and restore the nation's economic health were directly concerned with a variety of controversial social and economic issues. This involvement, coupled with a frequently unfavorable press, prompted a need for "explanatory activity" by the government. To transmit information concerning administration programs and efforts, Roosevelt created an extensive public information network to partly counter the unfavorable press, but also to establish direct channels of communication with citizens.[40]

Roosevelt had an overriding concern with both downward and upward channels of communication.[41] As political scientists Seligman and Cornwell point out,[42] "Perhaps no other president was so attuned to public opinion, or so conscientiously invited the public to communicate with him."

Roosevelt's 10-member National Emergency Council (NEC) was established as a coordinating body in November 1933 under the National Recovery Administration (NRA) to[43]

> . . . achieve, amidst domestic crisis, policy coordination of our bureaucracy . . . it had the task of devising policies that would restore production, investment, employment, consumer spending, and, above all, public morale.

At the NEC's first meeting, December 19, 1933, the major problem discussed was the up-flow of information to the President and to federal departments and agencies. Roosevelt said:[44]

> . . . it is tremendously important for every one of us to get a cross section from . . . every one of the forty-eight states, as to how the whole recovery program is working out. We haven't got it today.

Roosevelt went on to explain:[45]

> We want three things. First, we want to check up and see how the government operations are getting along; that is a checkup on ourselves. . . . The second is . . . the actual financial conditions. . . . And the third is public opinion.

The NEC's Division of Field Operations coordinated a vast network of field organizations in all the states which were not only administrative offices, but information offices as well. According to one researcher, the NEC and

its network of state offices became[46]

> . . . a public relations agency, operating through state directors who provided informational materials on federal activities at the state level, and handled inquiries from state and local governments, citizen groups and the public. The state directors also provided a public opinion reporting service on federal activities in the various states for officials in Washington, D. C.

Reports from the field were analyzed in Washington and submitted to heads of federal agencies and to the President. Just three months after establishment of this network, feedback clearly indicated that the public lacked information on NRA programs, it misunderstood those on which it had information, state-level agencies lacked information necessary to carry out the new programs, and not only were instructions on federal forms confusing, but the use of the forms was frequently misunderstood--hampering aid to citizens, businesses, farmers and others in need.[47]

Additionally, the NEC represented[48]

> . . . a unique effort to cope with the multiplication of field representatives of federal departments and agencies. Previously, local agencies could not communicate with each other except through Washington . . . With establishment of the NEC state directors, it was hoped that they would coordinate at the state level. This would give citizens a source of information on available government services and personnel in his area and would render unnecessary the circuitous communication between local offices and Washington.

NEC state directors acted as clearing houses for information concerning federal recovery agencies, answering and referring inquiries within the state to federal

agencies within the state or to Washington, and disseminating information on federal activities through local news media. Directors served as central sources for federal information and publicity within each state, not only for local government and the public, but for news media as well.[49]

The NEC also provided Washington officials with a press clipping service summarizing news and commentary of the mass media concerning success of federal programs in the states. This service had been established in July 1933, prior to establishment of the NEC, by Louis McHenry Howe, Roosevelt's secretary. Under the NEC the service became the Division of Press Intelligence and covered newspapers in every U. S. city with population over 25,000.[50]

Consumer Advisory Councils were established by the NEC at the county level as ". . . an important attempt to enlist consumer interest in government policy and to give the public a voice in government administration."[51] NEC plans called for 200 councils at the "grass-roots" level to adjust price complaints, act as direct channels of information to consumers, and to feed back to Washington the consumer's point of view on government programs and policies. The government gave the councils facts on federal consumer agencies, programs and efforts, and the councils fed back factual information from their communities concerning developments of interest to consumers as well as

consumer opinion.[52] According to the minutes of the first meeting of the NEC, Consumer Advisory Councils were[53]

> . . . simple human organizations through which the people of that locality can give voice to their peculiar economic problems as consumers. They get their political voice when they vote on election day, but they get no channel through which to express themselves on these problems.

The U. S. Information Service was created by the NEC in March 1934 to receive and respond to inquiries from the public, Congress and other federal agencies about government organization, programs and activities.[54] Offices of the U. S. Information Service were located in Washington, D. C., only. A by-product of this agency was development of the U. S. Government Manual--predecessor of the current annual, U. S. Government Organization Manual. Publication of this manual was intended to assist state and federal officials and the public to understand government organization and functions. Copies from the first printing of the manual were forwarded to all cities with a population over 80,000.[55]

Functions of the U. S. Information Service were described by the U. S. Government Manual it produced:[56]

> Inquiries concerning Government functions, organization, and personnel or general matters may be directed to the Information Center. . . Questions will be answered directly or referred to specialists in other agencies who can supply the needed information. Any agency of the Government which receives inquiries not falling within its jurisdiction, whether received by mail, telephone or in person, may refer such questions to the Division of Public Inquiries, Government Information Service, for reply or appropriate referral.

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [

By 1941, the Information Service was responding to more than 150,000 inquiries per year.[57]

The National Emergency Council was abolished July 1, 1939, as the government's concern turned from the Depression to national security.[58] The NEC's information and communication functions, however, were continued under the Office of Government Reports (OGR), an agency created simultaneously with abolishment of the NEC. The OGR inherited the NEC divisions of Press Intelligence, Field Offices and Information Service.[59]

The purpose of the OGR was to[60]

> . . . report to government opinions, desires, complaints of citizens with respect to the work of Federal agencies; to report from government information concerning the purposes and activities of the Executive Department and agencies to the people.

In October 1941 Roosevelt created the Office of Facts and Figures (OFF) to oversee the work of the other information organizations.[61] The OFF was primarily an information coordinating and liaison agency, although one of its prime functions was gathering intelligence. It determined what the different publics had been told and were thinking, it decided what needed to be done to promote better understanding, it coordinated programs to achieve this end, and it evaluated the effectiveness of these information programs.[62]

With the nation's entry into World War II, the Domestic Branch of the Office of War Information (OWI)

absorbed most of the information functions and agencies of the New Deal era. At the end of the war when OWI was liquidated, the Bureau of Public Inquiries and the Division of Press Intelligence survived and were transferred to the Bureau of the Budget.[63] The following year, the Office of Government Reports was reestablished as a separate agency within the Executive Office of the President.[64]

Within the OGR, the Government Information Service --previously the U. S. Information Service--was recreated to serve[65]

> . . . the government and the public by furnishing an information and/or referral service covering inquiries concerning the Government, and its component parts, their authority, functions, organization, activities, and locations of personnel.

Within the Government Information Service, the Division of Public Inquiries provided[66]

> . . . a centralized information service concerning the Federal Government that is available to all branches of the Government and to the public. Questions submitted in person, by telephone, or by mail are answered directly or referred to the proper agencies for reply.

Beginning in mid-1947, the functions of OGR were restricted to advertising liaison, motion picture liaison, and operation of libraries, and the agency was phased out by June 30, 1948.[67] Based on an examination of subsequent government organization manuals, no single federal agency later assumed the OGR functions performed by the Government Information Service or its subordinate, the Division of Public Inquiries.

As Seligman and Cornwell point out, Roosevelt was deeply concerned with two-way communication between citizens and government, but especially with upward communication: "This concern with administrative intelligence was unique in the history of national administrations . . ."[68] In a period when government was rapidly growing in size, complexity and involvement in the functioning of society, channels of communication and feedback between government and citizens were created. Agencies were established to coordinate the outflow of information from the numerous information-producing agencies, and to solicit, coordinate and react to feedback from the public. Agencies were established to receive and respond to inquiries from the public and to aid citizens in finding their way through the maze of government agencies, programs and information.

But because Roosevelt's New Deal agencies disappeared after World War II, this does not mean, of course, that government ceased attempts to establish effective communication with citizens. There have been over the years numerous attempts, programs and agencies of various sorts to enhance communication.

Related Endeavors of Contemporary Government

After the demise of FDR's agencies, no government-wide, centrally controlled and administered information program of the type initiated during the New Deal era appeared. Instead, a variety of individual agency programs,

all attempting in their own uncoordinated way and in their own specialized areas, grew up to help citizens avail themselves of federal information, programs, benefits, and to explain federal laws, rules and procedures--and to provide some measure of feedback. A sample of contemporary programs--excluding formal public information "press release" functions--indicates the diversity and complexity of government information activities.

Most federal agencies provide "information centers" of some sort in their main buildings in Washington, D. C. These vary in size and function from a mere "menu board" listing of departments and room numbers to more sophisticated centers such as the Department of Housing and Urban Development's central Washington information point for local and state officials and the public regarding housing and community development programs, or the Department of Commerce's Employment Information Center.

Besides these information points, the government publishes a wide variety of pamphlets and catalogs to aid citizens in understanding federal functions and availing themselves of the myriad federal programs, benefits and information services. These include simple pamphlets given to returning Vietnam veterans describing veterans' benefits and the Atomic Energy Commission's film catalogs for schools, and more ambitious documents such as the Department of Health, Education and Welfare's Programs and Services,

the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance, and the Department of Labor's directories of federal, state and city labor agencies.

Just as there are publications listing federal benefits and services, there are catalogs of publications. These can vary from a Federal Trade Commission listing of reports and the Census Bureau's index of unpublished census data, to the quarterly Consumer Product Information catalogs of the Consumer Product Information Coordinating Center and the numerous subject and bi-weekly catalogs of the thousands of publications distributed by the Government Printing Office.

Outside of Washington, D. C., numerous federal agencies operate "information centers" of some type, generally as collateral functions of regional, district, area and local offices. In one sense, it can be said that every federal office, whether it is a military recruiting station or a federal court, is an information center within its own specialized area of responsibility and expertise.

A sample of the types of specialized federal information offices which dispense information as a major, but not necessarily primary, function indicates the extent of government attempts to communicate at the local level.[69]

For example, most military installations have Off-base Housing Referral Offices, Visitors' Centers and Family Service Centers. The Office of Economic Opportunity

operates a Federal Information Exchange System. The Department of Housing and Urban Development has Regional Community Development Information Centers. Regional Federal Housing Administration offices conduct Home Counseling Services. Neighborhood centers under the Office of Economic Opportunity's Community Action Program dispense information on a variety of social services. The General Services Administration operates Public Service Centers at its regional offices to aid businessmen in dealing with the government. There are military information centers at most major airports to aid military travelers and dependents. The Department of Commerce operates a "Ombudsman for Business" program, and dozens of field offices of the Small Business Administration provide invaluable information to businessmen. The Civil Service Commission has a number of one-stop Job Information Centers throughout the country. The Social Security Administration provides information and assistance through a large number of district, branch and area offices and community service centers. The Geological Survey operates one-stop Water Information Centers at its regional offices. The Department of Health, Education and Welfare has regional Central Information and Visitor Centers. The Food and Drug Administration operates a "Consumer-Phone" service and the Veterans Administration has the "Enterprise" telephone service to provide toll-free telephone service to those communities not served by the

many VA offices. The Justice Department has a Community Relations Service and has special offices in certain cities to aid Cuban refugees in adjusting to American life. The Bureau of Mines operates an emergency "hot line" to receive safety complaints from mines around the country. To this list one can add Community Mental Health Centers of the National Institute of Mental Health, Employment Security Offices of the Department of Labor's Bureau of Employment Security, and Public Welfare Offices of the Welfare Administration.

This list can also include field offices of the Department of the Interior, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, Department of Labor, Internal Revenue Service, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, Interstate Commerce Commission, National Labor Relations Board, Railroad Retirement Board, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Federal Aviation Administration, Securities Exchange Commission, Selective Service, Federal Power Commission, Federal Communications Commission, Public Health Service, Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Department of Labor's Manpower Administration, U. S. Customs Offices, the Model Cities offices of Housing and Urban Development, Environmental Protection Agency offices, and even 1500 County Extension Agents of the Department of Agriculture who operate at the county-seat level.

All of these agencies and offices have as an

important function the provision of information on federal functions, laws, regulations, procedures, benefits, services and programs. The list is not exhaustive. One characteristic of all of these information-producing offices and programs is that they are specialized and provide information and assistance within their areas of responsibility. For a citizen to make efficient use of these agencies and services, he would first need to know which agencies were represented in his community and which office was responsible for what.

Another characteristic is that there is little coordination between agencies to reduce overlap and duplication, to know what another agency is doing, or to combine efforts to ensure citizens are given all information from all sources on whatever problems they may have. Just as the complexity of government, proliferation of agencies and duplication of functions confuse citizens, they must also confuse federal employees; there is no assurance that a misdirected inquiry to one of these agencies would result in a referral to the proper one. The lengthy list of information programs and the multitude of community-level, information-producing federal agencies serves to make more information available to more citizens at more contact points, but the sheer magnitude of this operation also adds to the confusion of the citizen in obtaining the information and assistance he needs.

Also, the fact that all these information programs and agencies exist does not mean they always function as intended. For example, in December 1971, the New York Times reported on the emergency "hot line" telephone service operated by the U. S. Bureau of Mines. This service, the Times said, was initiated in May 1971 and consisted of a 24-hour telephone answering and recording device to receive mine safety complaints telephoned toll-free from coal mines across the country. The Times quoted Bureau of Mines Director Elburt F. Osborn as saying safety complaints would be acted on "the next working day" and "instant action" was promised. But, the Times reported, the device was left untended and untranscribed for nearly two months and 64 minutes of taped mine hazard reports were inadvertently erased. A Bureau of Mines spokesman was quoted as saying employees "forgot about" the device.[70]

Contemporary government is not without its sources of feedback. A number of newspaper clipping services function within government, from the White House on down, to provide officials with what appears in the press. The government uses scientific polls and surveys, both by private organizations and public agencies, to gauge public opinion. Other channels of feedback by citizens and pressure groups to federal agencies via the corps of Washington lobbyists and pressure groups, plus feedback channels operating through executive departments for their

clientele--such as the Departments of Labor, Commerce, Defense and Agriculture--provide the federal government with a wealth of diverse information.

Members of Congress have traditionally been important channels for feedback to the government. Walter Gellhorn quotes one Senator as saying he received 1,000 to 2,000 letters daily from constituents. Another Senator reported he received from 1,000 to 10,000 per week.[71] Based on various surveys, however, Gellhorn estimates that 50 incoming letters per day is a reasonable average for each of the 535 congressmen.[72] Not all of these incoming communications are feedback in the sense of communicating complaints and needs to the government. Many, as Gellhorn points out, deal with visits to Washington, D. C., requests for special consideration, requests for jobs, avoidance of military service, public appearances of the congressman, and matters outside the purview of the federal government. Aside from these topics, a ten-month study by Gellhorn in 1965 disclosed that over 25 per cent of a congressman's mail involved citizen grievances and complaints about federal administration, and requests for information on government programs and services.[73] For the Congress as a whole, this form of feedback amounts to about 600,000 incoming letters each year[74]--plus an unknown number of telephone calls and personal visits, both in Washington, D. C., and district offices.

Beyond these feedback channels, the proliferation and diffusion of government agencies across the nation provide contact points and channels for feedback. Complaints, evidence of dissatisfaction and misinformation, requests for publications, publication sales, requests for information, suggestion systems, comment cards used to evaluate quality and completeness of services rendered, requests for speakers--all are potential sources of feedback to government.

Other Concepts: The Kahn Study

A 1966 study by the Columbia University School of Social Work bears some relation to the Federal Information Center program.[75]

The study, financed by the Ford Foundation and headed by Alfred J. Kahn of the Columbia University School of Social Work, commenced in late 1965 to investigate the need and feasibility of adapting an agency such as the British Citizens' Advice Bureau to American cities.[76]

Kahn's study began with the questions: Does the average city-dweller have adequate sources of information, advice, referral or help? How might American cities offer services which would help the citizen to find his way among the programs and facilities set up to serve him? What arrangements are possible to assure the individual convenient access to accurate information about his rights, entitlements or solutions to his predicaments?[77] According

to Kahn:[78]

> Widespread talk about and experimentation throughout the world with ombudsmen, advice services, telephone SOS services, one-stop service centers, administrative appeals machinery and decentralization of city planning procedures reflect searches for solutions.

The study was conducted by questionnaire, interviews and field studies directed at examining advice, information and referral services offered by social service agencies in New York city, including voluntary direct-service agencies and information agencies in the health-education-welfare field (including federal), civic associations, service clubs, unions, churches, civil rights groups, professional associations and legal service agencies.[79]

In the New York city field studies, Kahn found that even by using educated volunteers as inquirers with typical citizen questions, about one-third of all inquiries submitted to social service agencies ended without conclusive answers; for the remaining inquiries, the average question took three and one-half telephone calls to obtain the desired information from the correct agency. This, the study concluded, reflects[80] ". . . agencies' specialized functions and narrow conceptions of their responsibilities."

Planning for the study commenced in December 1965. Field work began in January 1966 and during March 1966 Kahn visited Washington, D. C., to examine existing and contemplated federal programs. This visit took place after

proposals had been made for an FIC program pilot study.

Kahn's Washington visit included interviews with officials from the Office of Economic Opportunity, Housing and Urban Development, Community Relations Service, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Bureau of Employment Security, National Institute of Mental Health, Welfare Administration, Social Security Administration, the President's Committee on Consumer Interests, and the Interagency Advisory Group.

Based on his Washington interviews, Kahn concluded that[81]

> At all agencies interviewed, there is serious concern about the availability and adequacy of information and referral services to their various clients. All concede that present mechanisms are inadequate, and most are contemplating measures which will make their operations more effective. Moreover, there is a good deal of familiarity with the British CAB concept . . .

Kahn said federal response to his ideas for a neighborhood information center along the lines of the British concept confirmed that the CAB idea was necessary but inadequate, and that the U. S. model should provide expert and confidential information and referral on the widest possible range of questions.[82] But, Kahn said, federal officials[83]

> . . . advocate in addition larger portions of the qualities of outreach, advocacy, and as far as possible, accessibility to the services to which referral is made.

Only the "Interagency Advisory Group's" plan for central information points, Kahn said, does not reflect this line

of thinking.

Kahn said in his report that plans were underway in Washington for a pilot "central information point" project[84]

> . . . to determine the demand for different kinds of information and the level of expertise required. Emphasis is to be placed on answering questions about government programs and facilities. . . . It is anticipated that service will be confined to information and simple referral, although sometimes appointments might be made or transportation provided. It is also contemplated that some direct service could be provided, such as at income tax time, without duplicating the major functions of another office or agency.

Concerning specific proposals for this new program, Kahn commented:[85]

> Located in prime downtown areas, the information points will attract commercial interests and middle-class people seeking information about specific federal programs. Useful service will be rendered. As currently conceived, the Central Information Points /later called Federal Information Centers/ would appear to be less than CAB's in the sense that many of the individually oriented functions . . . are not provided or emphasized. None of this decreases the importance of this new federal service. From the perspective of the current study these plans provide evidence of need.

Kahn noted that as his report went to press, the first Federal Information Center was to be opened in Atlanta, Georgia.

Kahn's study was completed in April 1966--three months before the first Federal Information Center opened.

His study committee concluded that there was a definite need for neighborhood information centers and recommended that centers be established in the United States to:[86] provide simple information--where something is and how

of clarity.

to get there; provide more complex information on the provisions of a law or an agency's function; clarify the significance of a statute for a specific person; give advice on how to proceed; steer to an agency able to help; refer to the right agency; provide a supporting, friendly relationship; help the inquirer with the contact, or make it for him; go beyond the presenting of a problem in helping people; carry out diagnostic study; carry out continuing counseling and treatment; follow through until the inquirer has his needs recognized; seek program changes; conduct general community education; recruit potential clients; provide feedback; and, facilitate the self-organization of people with common problems.

Other Concepts: The Freedom of Information Act

In the search for congressional action or legislation which may have in some way influenced the initiation of the Federal Information Center program, the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) of 1966 appears to have been an indirect influence.

In 1956, the House of Representatives Subcommittee on Foreign Operations and Government Information of the House Government Operations Committee began lengthy investigations and hearings under the leadership of Congressman William E. Moss into government control of popular information.

The particular target of the Moss Committee was the

government's executive branch information policies characterized as[87]

> . . . an impulse to secrecy . . . growing out of military crises, changes in government structure, the expansion of government powers, increases in the sheer size of government, and a declining faith . . . to expand popular rights to knowledge.

At the time of the Moss Committee hearings, the primary statute pertaining to release or withholding of government information was Section 3 of the Administrative Procedure Act of 1946.[88] The Act required that except for "any function of the United States requiring secrecy in the public interest," every executive agency shall publish in the Federal Register a description of its organization, places where the public may obtain information from the agencies, identification of papers, reports, rules and policies for guidance of the public, and shall make available to the public all opinions and orders "except those required for good cause to be held confidential." The Section concluded with,

> Save as otherwise required by statute, matters of official record shall in accordance with published rule be made available to persons properly and directly concerned except information held confidential for good cause found.

Objections to the Act centered around the vague phrases, "secrecy in the public interest," "for good cause found," and "persons properly and directly concerned."[89] Critics of the Act claimed that these broad statements led to unjustified withholding of information by executive

branch officials.

After 10 years, and with the help of the American Society of Newspaper Editors, the American Bar Association, numerous universities and scholars in journalism and law, the efforts of the Moss Committee resulted in passage of the Freedom of Information Act as a revision to Section 3 of the Administrative Procedure Act.[90] President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Act on July 4, 1966, and it went into effect July 4, 1967.[91]

When President Johnson signed the Act, he pointed out that ". . . a democracy works best when the people have all the information that the security of the nation permits," and he announced that he was[92]

> . . . instructing every official in this administration to cooperate to this end /minimizing restrictions on release of information/ and to make information available to the full extent consistent with individual privacy and with the national interest.

In essence, the FOI deleted the vague, broad statements in the Administrative Procedure Act, and instead specified nine categories of information that the government was permitted to withhold.

When the Act was passed, the House of Representatives explained the purpose was to[93]

> . . . provide a true Federal public records statute by requiring the availability to any member of the public of all of the executive branch records described in its requirements . . . . It is vital to our way of life to reach a workable balance between the right of the public to know and the need of the Government to keep information in confidence . . .

According to the courts, the purpose of the FOI is to prevent government agencies from unjustifiably withholding information that should be reasonably available to a person having some basis for seeking it.[94]

The benefits of the new revision, according to Ramsey Clark, then Attorney General, are:[95] that disclosure of information be the general rule, not the exception; that all individuals have equal right of access; that the burden be on the government to justify withholding information; that the people denied access to information have the right to seek relief in the courts; and, that this reflects a change in government policy and attitude toward disclosure of information to the public.

There is no apparent causal relationship between the FOI and the FIC program. Nevertheless, the persistent attempts by both the House and Senate to amend the Administrative Procedures Act, the tone of the Moss Committee hearings and the "freedom of information" atmosphere that these events contributed to certainly were not lost on President Johnson or the officials who were to play a role in establishing the Federal Information Center program. As one federal executive explained,[96]

> The impact of the FOI is pervasive and extends past the codified provisions of the Act. Thus, perhaps the most significant change lies not in the written document but in the spirit of the Act itself.

The first directive pertinent to the birth of the

FIC program was issued by President Johnson on November 1, 1965--after the Senate had approved a proposal to amend the Administrative Procedure Act and after a House version had been withdrawn for redrafting to eliminate executive branch objections. Specific proposals for a Federal Information Program originated in early 1966 after the Senate bill had been referred to the Moss Committee, approved and passed by the House without hearings or changes.[97] The first Federal Information Center opened in Atlanta, Georgia, seven days after President Johnson signed the Freedom of Information Act. As Carlton Spitzer pointed out:[98]

> Some government agencies have responded to this Act by initiating programs to make materials and data more readily available to the public; not only in Washington, but in regional offices, State and municipal bureaus of every kind, and even storefront information centers in the ghettos of large cities.

The Federal Information Center program may well have been one of these responses.

FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER II

[1]Cutlip, Effective Public Relations, p. 530.

[2]Donald C. Rowat, ed., The Ombudsman: Citizen's Defender, 2d ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968), p. xxiv.

[3]Ibid., pps. 7-11.

[4]Ibid., p. xii.

[5]Ibid.

[6]Ibid., p. xiii.

[7]Ibid., p. xiv.

[8]Ibid.

[9]Ibid., p. xvi.

[10]The American Assembly, Columbia University, Ombudsmen for American Government? (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1968), p. iii.

[11]William B. Gwyn, "Transferring the Ombudsman," in The American Assembly, Columbia University, Ombudsmen for American Government?, pps. 62-67.

[12]Donald C. Rowat, "The Spread of the Ombudsman Idea," in The American Assembly, Columbia University, Ombudsmen for American Government?, pps. 23-24. Despite the restriction on receiving complaints direct from citizens, the Second Report of the Commissioner for Administration, Session 1968-69, Annual Report for 1968 (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1969), p. 3, reports that the Parliamentary Commissioner received 808 written complaints in 1968 direct from citizens, and 1,120 from Members of Parliament.

[13]Rowat, The Ombudsman: Citizen's Defender, p. 174, quoting Geoffrey Marshall, Fellow of the Queen's College and Lecturer in Politics, University of Oxford.

[14]Alfred J. Kahn, et al, Neighborhood Information Centers: A Study and Some Proposals (New York: Columbia

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University School of Social Work, 1966), p. 16.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid., p. 29.

[17] Ibid., p. 18, and Alfred J. Kahn, "Social Services as Social Utilities," in Urban Development: Its Implications for Social Welfare, p. 130.

[18] Kahn, Neighborhood Information Centers, p. 20.

[19] Ibid., p. 32.

[20] Ibid., p. 17.

[21] Ibid., p. 32.

[22] Ibid., p. 33.

[23] To Know and Be Known, Vol. I, p. 5.

[24] "Notes on Information Canada," an undated fact sheet distributed by Information Canada. Appointment was made August 30, 1968. Previous studies on Canadian government information are discussed in T. Joseph Scanlon, "Canada Gets a C.I.A. (Central Information Agency)," a paper presented to the public relations section of the Association for Education in Journalism, August 19, 1970, Washington, D. C.

[25] To Know and Be Known, Vol. II, pps. 49, 195, 18.

[26] Ibid., p. 195.

[27] "Notes on Information Canada," p. 5.

[28] Letter from Susanne Duska, Assistant Chief, Enquiries Division, Information Canada, Ottawa, Canada, July 24, 1972, to author.

[29] "Information Canada Centres," p. 2. A fact sheet dated April 12, 1972, distributed by Information Canada. Quotes Canadian Cabinet Document CD-880-69.

[30] Ibid.

[31] To Know and Be Known, Vol. I, p. 36.

[32] "Information Canada Centres," p. 1.

[33] Letter from Susanne Duska, July 24, 1972.

[34]Ibid.

[35]Ibid., and pamphlets: "Index of Federal Government Programs and Activities," (extract) "Flow Sheet," (extract), and "Contact Book" (extract), all of the Enquiries Division, Information Canada.

[36]Letter from Susanne Duska, May 30, 1972.

[37]Ibid.

[38]"Information Canada Exhibit Program, 1971-1972," an undated fact sheet distributed by Information Canada.

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[40]Frances E. Rourke, Secrecy and Publicity: Dilemma of Democracy (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1961), p. 186.

[41]Lester G. Seligman and Elmer E. Cornwell, Jr., eds., New Deal Mosaic: Roosevelt Confers With His National Emergency Council, 1933-1936 (Eugene, Ore.: University of Oregon, 1965), p. 1.

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[43]Ibid., p. xxii.

[44]Ibid., p.13.

[45]Ibid., p. 17.

[46]Lamar Seal MacKay, "Domestic Operations of the Office of War Information in World War II" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1966), p. 6.

[47]Seligman, New Deal Mosaic, p.132.

[48]Ibid., p. 475.

[49]Ibid., p. 333.

[50]Ibid., p. 163.

[51]Ibid., p. xxvii.

[52]Ibid., p. 187.

[53]Ibid., p. 6.

[54]MacKay, Ph.D. dissertation, p.14.

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[56]Division of Public Inquiries, Bureau of the Budget, U. S. Government Manual, 1st Ed., 1946 (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1946), p. iii.

[57]Margaret Hicks Williams, "The President's Office of Government Reports," Public Opinion Quarterly, V (Winter 1941), p. 550.

[58]Government Information Service, Office of Government Reports, U. S. Government Manual, 2nd Ed., 1947 (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1947), p. 630.

[59]Bureau of Public Inquiries, U. S. Information Service, U. S. Government Manual, 1942 (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1942), p. 56.

[60]Williams, "The President's Office of Government Reports," p. 548.

[61]MacKay, Ph.D. dissertation, p. 7.

[62]Ibid., p. 36.

[63]Executive Order 9608 of August 31, 1945, 10 Federal Register 11223.

[64]U. S. Government Manual, 1947, p. 58. Executive Order 9809 of December 12, 1946.

[65]U. S. Government Manual, 1946, p. 56.

[66]Ibid.

[67]Division of the Federal Register, The National Archives, U. S. Government Manual 1948 (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1948), p. 638.

[68]Seligman, New Deal Mosaic, p. 1.

[69]See U. S. Civil Service Commission Improving Service to the Public: Agency Action Programs, Summary #2, June 1967, and Improving Service to the Public: Agency Action Programs, Summary #3, March 1968.

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[71]Walter Gellhorn, When Americans Complain: Governmental Grievance Procedures (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1966), p. 58.

[72]Ibid., p. 59.

[73]Ibid., pps. 63-65.

[74]Ibid., p. 93.

[75]Kahn, Neighborhood Information Centers. See footnote 38, Chapter I.

[76]Kahn, Neighborhood Information Centers, p. 12.

[77]Ibid., p. 8.

[78]Ibid., p. 11.

[79]Ibid., p. 13.

[80]Ibid., p. 48.

[81]Ibid., p. 75.

[82]Ibid.

[83]Ibid., p. 76.

[84]Ibid., p. 86.

[85]Ibid., p. 87.

[86]Ibid., p. 112.

[87]James Russell Wiggins, Freedom or Secrecy (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956).

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[89]"A History of the Federal Records Law," Freedom of Information Center Report No. 189, School of Journalism, University of Missouri at Columbia, November 1967, p. 10.

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[95]U. S. Department of Justice, Attorney General's Memorandum on the Public Information Section of the Administrative Procedure Act (June 1967), 20 Ad. L. Rev. 263 (1968).

[96]Carl E. Baggee (Former Member Federal Power Commission). "The Federal Power Commission and Freedom of Information," 20 Ad. L. Rev. 153 (1968).

[97]"A History of the Federal Records Law," FOI Center Report No. 189, p. 11.

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CHAPTER III

THE ORIGIN AND GROWTH OF THE FEDERAL INFORMATION CENTER PROGRAM

The Beginning

Thirty-two years after President Franklin Delano Roosevelt established the National Emergency Council with its numerous agencies for two-way communication, a Roosevelt protege, former New Deal congressman and friend of several NEC members--Lyndon Baines Johnson[1]--announced in November 1965 an ambitious government-wide program to foster better government-citizen communication. Amid the atmosphere created by debates leading to the Freedom of Information Act and by proposals for a national ombudsman, President Johnson created a committee of top-level officials to identify problems and remove obstacles in the way of efficient communication between government and citizens.

Irving Kator, assistant executive director for the U. S. Civil Service Commission (CSC), says that President Johnson expressed concern during a Cabinet meeting in mid-1965 that government agencies were not being as responsive to the public as he would like them to be,[2] and the President asked Civil Service Commission Chairman John W. Macy, Jr., to ". . . survey our existing practices /to

provide the best possible service to the public/ and to suggest ways to improve our efforts."[3] Macy's report to the President, Kator says, prompted President Johnson's November directive.

In his November 1, 1965, memorandum, President Johnson directed each government department and agency head to appoint a high-level executive to improve each organization's service to the public, and to participate on a committee headed by Chairman Macy. The President explained:[4]

> The task of government is to serve the public. It has been my deep and continuing concern to assure that each American receives from his government the fastest, most courteous service. As our society grows more complex and our population expands we must explore every path in our quest to provide the best possible service for our individual citizens. . . . The time for action is now. This is particularly so in view of the new programs recently passed by Congress which reach all of our people.

Macy was placed in charge of the government-wide program and was required to make a report to the President every 90 days on progress[5] ". . . to improve the quality of service and to make the government more accessible to the people it serves." Agency heads were given until December 15, 1965, to report to Macy steps taken to improve the quality of service and plans for future improvements.

Macy met with these officials on December 2, 1965, and received progress reports from them on December 15, 1965, and January 15, 1966. Macy's first report to President Johnson was released to the public February 26, 1966.[6]

In his first progress report, Macy indicated general success with the program, and outlined actions he had taken plus gave examples of specific actions taken by individual agencies and departments to provide better service to the public. Macy explained:[7]

> These reports [from individual agencies] show vigorous action to improve the quality of service to the public. All units, from the smallest to the largest, have acted, here and overseas, to improve their service and they have many plans for more action.
>
> More importantly, top managers are instilling in their employees the spirit of service to the public. They have become involved personally in making their organizations fully responsive to the needs of the public.

The specific actions taken by individual agencies in response to the President's memorandum included:

> Setting up government bookstores in major metropolitan areas to make government publications more accessible to the public;
>
> Developing functional telephone directories to help the public more easily locate federal services;
>
> Improving mail delivery and setting up more self-service post offices;
>
> Consolidating contractor services so one federal agency can represent a number of agencies in dealing with a single contractor;
>
> Providing more one-stop service opportunities for people doing business with government agencies;
>
> Getting more easily understood information to the public from the investment community;
>
> Setting up information desks to serve the public who visit federal buildings;
>
> Establishing information centers for tourists in conjunction with state-maintained rest stops along some highways.

Under the heading of "I took these other actions," Macy said in his report to the President that[8]

> With GSA, started work to develop the first Federal central information point to provide information and referral service on all Federal activities. The first center will be in a major metropolitan area and is planned as a pilot operation to give us helpful experience in setting up other centers.

Thus, the concept of federal information centers was mentioned to President Johnson in Macy's first progress report, after one meeting of the committee, and was identified as a plan already underway rather than as a proposal.

Irving Kator explains:[9]

> At a number of meetings [by the government-wide committee] on the subject [improvement of services to the public], top priority was given to pinpointing the problems that stood in the way of better service to the public, and how to overcome them. One problem kept recurring--the difficulty the citizen has in finding his way around the Government, and his need to be able to locate, with a minimum of referral from office to office, the particular agency and office which could help him with his problem. . . . People may not get the benefits of new programs designed to help them because they don't know about the program or how it operates or simply because they don't know where to go to find out about it.

According to Kator, Macy posed to his committee the question of what steps could be taken to improve service to the public, and recommendations were made for a central point for citizens to come where they could learn of government services in which they were interested. Kator says:[10]

> Agency officials were concerned with the inability of a private citizen to call one number and get appropriate information. Usually, he would be required to call from one number to another until, after many calls, he might or might not get the information needed. There was recognition by the agency officials that it would

> be desirable to have one local point in a metropolitan area to which a citizen could come and find out about the Government services available to him. The concept then was a joint one arising in discussions the Chairman had with agency officials.

Shortly after Macy's first progress report, Alfred J. Kahn of the Columbia University School of Social Work visited Washington, D. C., in connection with his study on neighborhood information centers.[11] Kahn made reference to the program identified by Macy (see Chapter II, section titled, "The Kahn Study") but attributed it to the "Interagency Advisory Group." The Interagency Advisory Group, however, is[12]

> . . . a medium for consultation and communication between the Civil Service Commission and federal agencies on important issues in federal personnel administration. . . . it is an inter-departmental organization of the top career personnel officials of the Government, chaired by the /Civil Service/ Commission's Executive Director.

Macy's committee of officials charged with improving service to the public is identified in the committee's own meeting minutes as "Agency Officials in Charge of Programs to Improve Service."[13] Both organizations, however, were headed by Civil Service Commission officials. John W. Macy, Jr., headed the Civil Service Commission, the Interagency Advisory Group and the committee to improve service to the public. Irving Kator was Macy's assistant in all three functions. Kator explains:[14]

> While meetings /of the committee to improve services to the public/ were sometimes held with the Interagency Advisory Group, that group which is composed of

> Directors of Personnel was not directly involved in implementing the program although they made significant contributions to it in many different ways.

As to other factors which may have prompted initiation of the program, Kator says:[15]

> We were familiar with the British concept of Citizens' Advice Bureaus and had considered them in relation to the establishment of the Federal Information Centers. However, the Citizens' Advice Bureaus are somewhat different in concept and often provide certain kinds of services to British citizens. The FIC's, on the other hand, provide no direct service other than a referral to the proper source where the service can be obtained. Nevertheless, the concepts are similar.
>
> I don't believe the Freedom of Information Act or even the impetus leading to it gave any particular emphasis to the FIC program. What was more significant was the ombudsman concept which was at that time being aired in the United States. While we don't consider FIC's as ombudsmen in any sense of the word, we do feel that many of the problems which a citizen might have might be cleared up if he knew where to go to get the proper information to handle his problem.

Irving Kator reports that not all government officials were optimistic about the information center program mentioned in Macy's first progress report:[16]

> Although the need was recognized, doubt was expressed by some that it was actually possible to set up comprehensive and effective information centers. There was a question as to whether any reasonable number of people, at a central point accessible to the public, could possibly know enough and have enough information readily available to handle the multitude and variety of questions bound to arise.

Nevertheless, Chairman Macy asked Lawson Knott, General Services Administration (GSA) Administrator, to test the information center concept, and Robert Griffin, Assistant GSA Administrator,[17] was appointed to head the

Task Force to Study Feasibility of Centralized Federal Information Centers in Metropolitan Areas. This task force included representatives of the Civil Service Commission and Bureau of the Budget (now Office of Management and Budget) as well as GSA personnel.

Atlanta, Georgia, was picked by the task force as the site for the pilot project based on recommendations by GSA officials. According to Kator,[18]

> This was significant because Atlanta did not promise to be an easy test. Atlanta is one of the few major metropolitan areas remaining in the Nation which does not have a large Federal building or a complex which houses many Federal offices. Instead, the Federal population of 25,500 in Atlanta, representing over 50 Federal agencies, is scattered about in 57 separate locations. If the information center worked in Atlanta, it should work elsewhere.

Kator explains that the dispersion of federal activities in the Atlanta area and the resulting need for a central information point prompted the selection of Atlanta for the pilot project.[19]

The Public Affairs Committee of the Atlanta Federal Executive Board made a feasibility study of the proposed establishment of an information center.[20] In a report of March 11, 1966, the committee gave the results of a telephone survey conducted in Atlanta to justify the need for such a center. The survey reported that Atlanta area federal agencies received an average of 500 million inquiries yearly, and that at least 25 million of these were "misdirected."

The concept of a "Federal Information Center" as envisioned by Macy and the task force generally consisted of the following elements: it was to be a relatively small office located in a central federally-owned building; it was to be staffed by three to five Civil Service employees; it would be administered by the General Services Administration; it would be equipped with a wide variety of reference publications on government organization, functions and officials--with emphasis on federal agencies and programs operating in the same city as the center; the center would stock a small number of government publications and pamphlets for either free distribution or sale to citizens; the center would be equipped with several incoming telephone lines; center personnel would respond to telephone, letter or personal inquiries from the public on any government-related topic; depending on the nature of the inquiry, center personnel would answer the question completely upon receipt, or would refer the inquirer to the proper agency, official and telephone number where appropriate information and assistance could be obtained. When references were inadequate to indicate the correct agency to which an inquiry should be referred, center personnel were to do the necessary research to locate the correct agency. Courtesy telephones would be available at the centers to connect citizens with federal agencies in the local area, and also with Washington, D. C., officials if necessary.

In essence, the centers were to provide "information on information." It would not be their function to provide substantive information on a subject, but to know exactly where and from whom such information could be obtained. The plan for the centers did not include advocacy, "ombudsman," or social services functions in the manner of the British Citizens' Advice Bureaus; nor was obtaining "feedback" in the manner of the Information Canada Centers a stated function of the centers. The centers were to be "information-advice-referral" agencies to aid citizens in locating the federal agency and official who could provide them with whatever information or assistance was needed.

Once the decision was made to establish a pilot center in Atlanta, GSA officials and American Telephone and Telegraph officials jointly developed a master index of federal functions and services performed in the Atlanta area. When completed, the index contained about 300 functions. The next step was to send this index to all federal agencies in the area for them to indicate which services they performed under each of the headings, and the person, office and telephone number who could be contacted for more information on the subject. The final "functional directory" ended up with over 1,100 separate listings. The entries were next transferred to paper strips and arranged in a visible index file for reference by center personnel.[21]

A staff of five persons was then recruited to operate the center. Kator explains:[22]

> . . . people were needed who had strong feelings of empathy and understanding for the problems of others. Often the citizen does not know just how to phrase his problem; it takes tact and patience--and expertise at interviewing--to make a proper referral for service.

Staff members underwent training in the functions and organization of all the federal agencies in the Atlanta area and visited most of the agencies to learn where they were, what they did and how they were organized.

In his second progress report to the President, Chairman Macy noted that Atlanta had been selected for the pilot study and that the center was tentatively scheduled to open on July 1, 1966. Macy said,[23]

> Based on Atlanta experience, centers should be opened rapidly in other metropolitan areas. These centers are an important new concept in providing better service to our citizens--a "where to turn" place to find out which Federal activity can provide assistance on specific problems.

The Atlanta Federal Information Center opened July 11, 1966. President Johnson sent telegrams to Atlanta officials on the occasion of the center opening, and is quoted as saying:[24]

> I am confident that the Center will provide a major public service to the people of Atlanta and will be a significant step forward in our program to provide the best possible service to our citizens. It is vitally important that we bring Federal programs and activities within the reach of every citizen whose rights and needs are affected by them. This new information center will help us do this. It will assist citizens who need a service provided by the Federal Government

> but do not know which agency or office provides that service.

According to Kator, the President characterized the Atlanta FIC as a "where to turn center" and "a new channel of communications between Government and its citizens."

Kator described the early operations of the Atlanta FIC:[25]

> Business was brisk right from the beginning . . . . At the beginning there was a 50-50 ratio between personal visits to the Center and telephone calls. However, shortly after the Center opened, the new Atlanta telephone directory appeared. On each page of the Government listings, the Information Center phone number is prominently shown. The number of telephone inquiries immediately skyrocketed . . . . Not surprisingly, agencies that deal directly with the public are those about which the Center receives the most inquiries. HEW and Treasury Department are the agencies about which most questions are asked. There are many inquiries about Federal employment . . . . Many questions involve GSA services, especially how to buy from and sell to the Government. . . . a good number of inquirers are referred to State, local, or county offices for the services they need.

Based on the number and type of inquiries received, the Atlanta experiment was considered by government officials to be a dramatic success. Within two months after opening, it was handling 2,500 inquiries monthly.[26] During its first 12 months, the center responded to an average of 5,000 inquiries per month.[27] Experience soon indicated that three personnel could handle the volume of inquiries and the staff was reduced accordingly.

Chairman Macy told President Johnson on June 26, 1967:[28]

> This experimental center fulfilled its promise of providing better service to the public and has also provided important experience on which to build centers in other cities.

As early as January 1967, plans were underway for additional centers in Boston, Chicago, Kansas City, Denver and San Francisco.[29] On April 24, 1967, the second Federal Information Center was opened in Kansas City, Missouri.[30]

Kator says the opening of the Kansas City FIC was prompted by a visit there of GSA Administrator Knott and James L. Harrison, Public Printer of the United States. These two officials stopped at the Kansas City Federal Building on their way back to Washington, D. C., after visiting former President Harry S. Truman in Independence, Missouri. Kator reports the two officials[31]

> . . . recognized immediately the desirability of opening an information center in the building lobby. In addition, the Public Printer agreed that he would open a Government bookstore along with the information center, both of which would be adjacent to the Civil Service Commission's Job Information Center.

Along with the opening of the Kansas City Federal Information Center, a government bookstore was opened. This bookstore stocked over 800 different publications, and had available for mail order, catalogs for another 25,000 titles. During its first month of operation, the bookstore served 1,800 customers, while its FIC neighbor responded to more than 2,500 inquiries.[32]

A Related Service: Government Bookstores

In response to President Johnson's directive of

November 1, 1965, to improve service to the public, the Government Printing Office formed a departmental committee headed by the Special Assistant to the Public Printer and including representatives from the offices of Purchasing, Personnel and the Superintendent of Documents--the three areas having direct contact with the public.[33]

As part of the Government Printing Office's actions to improve service to the public, the committee increased the hours of its main Washington, D. C., store to remain open Saturday mornings, and opened an additional bookstore in the Department of State building. In addition,[34]

> Under this committee, cooperation with private enterprises such as direct mail organizations, banking houses, radio stations, trade magazines and periodical publishers, and outdoor societies, was intensified for the purposes of promoting government book sales.

As a result of the committee's efforts, direct mail organizations regularly included flyers in mailings to members, radio stations devoted public service time to advertising government publications, and trade magazines were asked to include mention of new government publications in their regular book review sections.[35]

An important recommendation that came out of this committee was to establish government bookstores outside of Washington, D. C., for the first time. There were five bookstores in Washington, D. C., itself: the Government Printing Office building, U. S. Information Agency, Department of Commerce, the Pentagon, and the Department of

of State.[36]

The first government bookstore outside of Washington, D. C., was opened in Chicago, Illinois, on March 21, 1967. Within its first three months of operation, the Chicago store served almost 8,000 customers.[37]

In his January 24, 1967, progress report to President Johnson, Chairman Macy said, "Making our publications easily available to people throughout the nation is a major step in bringing the Government closer to the people it serves."[38]

Slightly over one month after the Chicago bookstore opened, the second bookstore outside of Washington, D. C., opened in Kansas City, Missouri, along with the nation's second Federal Information Center. Irving Kator aptly described this arrangement:[39]

> A combination Federal Information Center and Government bookstore is a natural. Both serve, and provide information to, the public. Combining them permits interchangeability of staff and economical operation. . . . The addition of Government bookstores to Federal Information Centers is an important plus. Where, as in Kansas City, the Federal Job Information Center, the Federal Information Center, and the Government Bookstore are located together in prime space in a Federal office building, improved service to the public becomes a certainty and this installation is a model for other cities to follow.

After the opening of the Kansas City bookstore, stores were opened in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Boston, Atlanta, Denver, Detroit, Minneapolis, New York, Philadelphia and St. Louis. The San Francisco store, which opened in January 1969, became within about a year the largest

seller of government publications among all GPO bookstores except for the main store in Washington, D. C. The store in San Francisco served almost 6,000 customers during its first month of operation.[40]

The FIC Program Grows

Soon after the opening of the Kansas City FIC, Irving Kator concluded:[41]

> There is no longer any question about the desirability of establishing Federal Information Centers. The Atlanta and Kansas City operations prove the value of this new service. . . .
>
> Great potential exists for improved service to the public through Federal Information Centers. The centers bridge the gulf that too often separates the citizen from his government. They are an affirmative response to a demonstrated need for better sources of information, advice, and referral about Government services.

In his June 26, 1967, report to the President, Chairman Macy told President Johnson,[42]

> This new concept in service is a direct outgrowth of your personal interest in improving service to the public. Plans are under way to open information centers in other major metropolitan areas to assure that citizens there have a central information and referral point for Government services.

A White House press release of November 24, 1967, reported the President's satisfaction with the FIC program, and announced that centers would be opened in Chicago, Boston, Denver, San Francisco and Fort Worth within a year.[43] These centers, it was reported, would be financed by contributions from the federal agencies in the immediate area of the centers, without additional expenditures.

Chairman Macy was quoted in the release as saying the Atlanta and Kansas City centers have improved service to the public with little or no additional expense to the government because a citizen properly served the first time will not require the extra expense of repeat service for the same matter.

Following the Kansas City FIC, the next center to open was in Boston, Massachusetts, March 15, 1968. During the remainder of 1968, centers were opened in Chicago, Denver, Fort Worth, and San Francisco. New York's FIC opened in January 1969 and was followed by the opening of the Los Angeles center in February 1969.

When President Nixon assumed office in January 1969, nine Federal Information Centers were either in operation or about to begin operations, as in the case of New York and Los Angeles.

President Nixon, according to Herbert G. Klein, director of communications for the Executive Branch,[44]

> . . . recognized the need for a closer relationship between the public and the Government early in his Administration. The Federal Information Center program was identified as an excellent way to provide that necessary link. Therefore, with the President's impetus, the system was expanded from nine Centers to 29.

In a memorandum of October 27, 1969, addressed to the heads of all executive departments and agencies and discussing "better service to the public," President Nixon explained[45]

> On assuming the responsibilities of this office, I made the observation that our Executive Branch needs to be more responsive to the people we serve. . . . As a means of furthering better service to the public, I believe the program establishing Federal Information Centers to provide single points of inquiry to the public on all Government activities is a good one. It should now be extended from its present number of nine to every major metropolitan area. I request that all agency heads cooperate in this effort. They should also explore the feasibility of combining Government information and referral centers in a community into one public information center.

And,

> I am asking Chairman Hampton[46] whose staff initially developed the Federal Information Center concept, and Administrator Kunzig, whose Agency (GSA) has had experience in administering the existing Information Centers, to proceed as rapidly as possible in establishing additional Centers. The General Services Administration will operate them. The costs of the Centers should be shared by all benefiting agencies. State and local governments are to be invited to participate so that a citizen might receive information relative to all levels of government from one central point in a community.

As President Nixon pointed out in his memorandum, the General Services Administration was to continue with the responsibility for administering the FIC program although the program had been conceived initially by Civil Service Commission executives. As the government's business arm, the GSA is tasked with providing a variety of services required by other agencies in the execution of their functions. When the Atlanta Federal Information Center was opened, GSA was already operating 38 information desks in lobbies of federal buildings around the country. These desks plus GSA telephone operators handled inquiries from citizens in much the same way as do the Federal

Information Centers, although on a reduced level and with less expertise. The FIC program was permanently placed in the GSA partly because of the administrative service mission of the agency, partly because GSA was already providing information services to the public, and because the Task Force to Study Feasibility of Centralized Federal Information Centers in Metropolitan Areas recommended it.[47]

The first Federal Information Center to open under President Nixon's extension of the program was the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, center, which opened October 28, 1969. The day before the Philadelphia center opened, President Nixon told his agency and department heads:[48]

> In addition to providing easy access for the citizen to information about all Government services from a central location, the Federal Information Centers should also be places for receiving ideas and suggestions from the public. This would carry out the "listening post" concept which I first mentioned during the campaign and which received enthusiastic response across the country. The newest Center, opening October 28, in Philadelphia, will be the first to embody the "listening post" idea. Civil Service Commission Chairman Robert E. Hampton and General Services Administrator Robert L. Kunzig will notify you of the procedures to be instituted for handling the special correspondence which this Center and the succeeding "listening posts" will generate.

The "Listening Post" Concept

President Nixon's "Listening Post" idea was first tried just prior to the Republican National Convention in early August 1968.[49]

During the Republican campaign, voters were invited by campaign officials to telephone various offices around

the country, and say "whatever was on their minds." Republican campaign officials divided the nation into 27 sections, and provided each with either a mobile or stationary office to obtain the views of voters.[50] "Listening Post" efforts were generally used in conjunction with a visit to the area by a key person campaigning on behalf of Richard Nixon, such as members of Congress, key campaign officials, etc.

Results of these recordings of voters' views were tabulated, summarized and studied by campaign officials. Summaries were given to all key staff members and to Richard Nixon, and excerpts of the recordings were provided to Nixon. Each citizen who submitted a comment or suggestion was to receive a reply within one week on the matter with which he was concerned.[51]

According to the New York Times:[52]

> Hundreds of Americans are talking to Richard M. Nixon each day, and he is responding to each of them--thanks to the imaginative use of electronic gadgetry by his citizen supporters.

Using computer-controlled typewriters, replies to citizen comments and inquiries were compiled from a computer memory bank of 67 Nixon positions on key issues taken from his speeches and writings. An electronic signature machine signed "Richard M. Nixon" to the letters sent to inquirers.[53]

A "statistics section" of the campaign tabulated the input weekly and submitted to key officials summaries of

what people were concerned with each week.

The Times concluded:[54]

> . . . if it showed nothing else, /it/ uncovered without further analysis the issues that preoccupied the thinking of the voter. This knowledge enabled the candidate to address himself to the problems of concern in the areas where he was campaigning.

In addition, the Times said, the program allowed campaign officials to know what citizen concerns were, nationally and locally, and when "hot" issues cooled down and were replaced by others.

This "feedback" concept, conceived in the 1968 presidential campaign, was to be made part of the Federal Information Center program by presidential directive. According to Irving Kator, this concept as applied to the FIC program also ". . . traced part of its seeds to the ombudsman climate /existing in Washington, D. C., at the time/."[55] A Civil Service Commission press release of November 13, 1969, said, "Listening Posts were authorized . . . to carry out the President's pledge during the campaign to have an open administration and to seek ideas and suggestions from the public."[56]

The Philadelphia FIC was scheduled to be the first in a series of 15 centers to be opened in 1969-1970--each with a listening post capability as well as an information center function. Listening posts were planned for Cleveland, Minneapolis, St. Louis, Seattle, Albuquerque, Baltimore, Buffalo, Cincinnati, Detroit, Miami, Newark, New

Orleans, Pittsburgh and Portland, Oregon.[57] According to the Federal Times, President Nixon had indicated there would eventually be a listening post in every major city.[58]

A White House press release, issued the day prior to the opening of the Philadelphia FIC, explained:[59]

> The Philadelphia FIC will have the additional responsibility of serving as the first "President's Listening Post." It will be a reception point where Philadelphia area citizens can submit to the Government suggestions and ideas concerning Government operations. This is a pilot program and the President has requested all Federal agencies to be prompt and responsive to the suggestions and ideas written on the special forms provided by the Philadelphia Center.

Secretary of Housing and Urban Development George Romney and Assistant to the President for Urban Affairs Daniel P. Moynihan were sent by the President to Philadelphia on October 28th ". . . to listen on his behalf to the views, suggestions and concerns of citizens living in the core city" and to dedicate the opening of the Philadelphia FIC/ Listening Post.[60]

A joint Civil Service Commission-General Services Administration memorandum of November 6, 1969, to the heads of executive departments and agencies explained:[61]

> As a means of carrying out the President's desire to bring the citizen closer to his Government and to open new channels of communication between Government and the citizen, a President's Listening Post has been established as part of the new Philadelphia Federal Information Center. The Listening Post will encourage citizens to make suggestions and direct their ideas about Government to appropriate agency headquarters where they will be analyzed and replies made to the citizen. In addition to getting ideas from the public, the Listening Posts will give department and agency

> heads an opportunity to hear from citizens about the service their organization renders and how it might be improved. Operation of the Listening Post in Philadelphia will give us the experience necessary to extend the same service to other areas of the nation.
>
> The success of the Listening Post depends on the full cooperation of department and agency heads. Each key official is a vital part of the Listening Post operation.

As noted in the White House press release, special "President's Listening Post" forms were available at the Philadelphia FIC for a citizen to complete, noting his question, suggestion or complaint. The forms were in the format of a letter titled, "The President's Listening Post" and addressed to "President Richard Nixon, The White House, Washington, D. C.," with a "Mr. President:" salutation. The forms could be completed at the FIC or returned to the FIC in a franked pre-addressed envelope. FIC personnel were charged with providing whatever assistance was necessary to help people complete the forms, and when requested, FIC staff would accept suggestions by telephone and put them on the special forms.[62]

When inquiries could best be handled locally, listening post procedures required that the FIC staff get the necessary information for the citizen and refer the citizen to the appropriate local federal office.[63]

Upon receipt by the listening post, the original copy of a citizen's suggestion form was to be forwarded in a special envelope to a designated official in the appropriate federal agency. This was to be a top level official

charged with responsibility for improving an agency's service to the public. Names of these officials were to be submitted to the Civil Service Commission so that incoming listening post mail could be properly routed. Forms issued were to be returned to the FIC and not mailed to Washington by citizens. A copy of each citizen's suggestion was to be forwarded to the appropriate agency's local or regional office serving the Philadelphia area. A third copy was to be retained by the FIC and a final copy was to be sent to the Civil Service Commission for information.[64]

Procedures required that each department and agency, under the signature of the headquarters official responsible for action, should reply "directly, promptly, and responsively" to the person making the suggestion. Each return letter was to begin with: "The President has asked me to reply . . . ."[65]

Where suggestions could be adopted, the reply was to indicate this and give proper recognition to the citizen. When complaints about a department's or agency's service were received, they were to be investigated promptly, corrective action taken and the citizen notified. Direct telephone circuits were available at the FIC to allow citizens to talk to a Washington or local official when appropriate.[66]

Officials were asked to maintain close control of listening post mail and were charged with submitting monthly

reports to the Civil Service Commission of the total number of suggestions or inquiries received by the department and the number of delinquent replies. Citizen inquiries and suggestions were to be answered within 14 days of receipt. These reports, according to the Civil Service Commission-General Services Administration memorandum of November 6, 1969, were to be forwarded to President Nixon.[67]

At the February 12, 1970, meeting of the government officials in charge of programs to improve service to the public, Civil Service Commission Chairman Hampton noted that the volume of suggestions received by the Philadelphia Listening Post had been low up to that point. It was stressed that the opening of additional listening posts was contingent on the success of the Philadelphia experiment. Hampton pointed out that the information centers and listening posts did not get to the real question of service provided by an agency, but were merely means outside the agency of achieving better service to the public. The real problem, he said, remains of making each agency's service more responsive to the needs of the public. In this vein, he asked agency heads to consider ". . . what happens to the suggestions when they are received in the agencies? How does the agency respond and is appropriate action taken?"[68] Minutes of the meeting also indicate that:[69]

> Despite the limited number of suggestions received at the Listening Post, agency representatives felt it was important for citizens to have an opportunity to speak

> directly to the Executive Branch on matters of vital concern to them. They felt the Listening Post offered this opportunity and believed the concept should be extended at a minimum to one or more other metropolitan areas before a final decision was made concerning further extension of the Listening Posts.

It was announced at the meeting that officials were no longer required to compile summaries of inquiries received and responses sent, but were merely to forward a copy of each reply to Irving Kator. The officials also mentioned the practice of disposing of citizen complaints at the local level, rather than in Washington, D. C.:[70]

> There was some discussion about the desirability of the Philadelphia Listening Post requesting local or regional offices of agencies to handle specific issues brought to its attention. The general consensus was that it was desirable that matters be funneled directly to the agency official in charge of improved service so that he would have an opportunity to see what citizens were saying about the work of his agency. At the same time, there was recognition that the problems brought to the attention of agencies in this way would sometimes need to be referred to the local area for action.

A Wall Street Journal article of April 28, 1970, provides a different view of the problems of the Philadelphia listening post after six months of operation.[71]

The article reports that by the end of April 1970, the listening post had received a total of 74 communications from citizens, and these 74 letters ". . . have been shuffled around the capital bureaucracy just like the hundreds of thousands of complaints and suggestions that citizens mail straight to the White House each year."

The Journal quoted Irving Kator as saying, "We

thought we'd be inundated, but it hasn't produced the large number of either requests or suggestions we thought it might have." The article said Philadelphia's low input had delayed plans for opening additional listening posts, but quoted Kator as insisting that expansion of the concept was likely.

General Services Administration officials in Philadelphia were quoted as saying the project suffered from a lack of publicity, claiming that television public service announcements were aired at poor times for reaching the maximum audience. The Journal noted that the listening post was not located in the main lobby of the Federal building, but ". . . adjacent to the Federal Building's little-used side door . . ." and that "There's no separate listing for the Listening Post in the phone book; even the phone company's information operator can't produce a number for the President's project."

The article said that the usual assurance given citizens by PIC personnel was that the information on the form would "get to the President." In fact, however, the listening post procedures required that the forms be sent to various government officials having cognizance over the subject matter in the form, and the citizens were to receive replies direct from these officials. The Journal said that not even a member of the White House staff had seen any of the letters from citizens or a summary of them--contrary to

the procedures outlined in the November 6, 1969, CSC-GSA memorandum setting up listening post operating procedures.

The Journal also described several complaints and questions submitted by citizens which received less than prompt, appropriate replies. It did not mention any cases that were satisfactorily answered.

The Journal noted that one woman's complaint forwarded to the Assistant Secretary of Defense was, after several months, given to "a nameless military sergeant" for investigation. A letter sent to the Department of Agriculture was answered by saying the matter was properly a state function, but the reply failed to identify the state agency or official who could help and did not refer the matter directly to a state agency. The Justice Department's contact man for the listening post was quoted as saying that he had not received any citizen letters forwarded to him, and had never heard of the listening post program. Another letter from a group of Black students concluded with "We shall all be very interested in seeing what comes of this attempt to reach yo[illegible]. . . . we want to see if you care as much as it seems you do or if this letter winds up in a file or answered by a secretary . . ." The letter, according to the Journal, was never answered and ended up in a dead file.

The listening post concept was discontinued at Philadelphia in January 1971--slightly over one year after

it had begun. The Philadelphia FIC continued its information functions but no longer acted as a listening post as well. The listening post concept was not tried at any other Federal Information Centers after the Philadelphia experience. According to the Washington, D. C., FIC Coordinator:[72]

> Low volume of public response was primarily responsible for the decision to discontinue the operation. The public's reaction to having its letters answered by lower-level Federal officials rather than by the White House also contributed to the decision.

An United Press International article appearing in the April 4, 1971, issue of the Cincinnati Enquirer, reported that the federal government ". . . has discovered that while its citizens may complain about government, they apparently don't bother to tell about it even when given the chance."[73] The article said:

> The /Philadelphia listening/ post was advertised as the answer to the problem of cutting through government red tape. The post, it was said, would enable the public to "go right to the top" with complaints or suggestions and would be the forerunner of a dozen more such posts. . . . Today there are no listening posts. The one in Philadelphia lasted less than 15 months. The others never got off the ground.
>
> The Philadelphia listening post received only about 250 communications during its short life span. And while it was set up to get answers "from the top," the post itself had trouble at times piercing the bureaucratic red tape.

The article said Richard Vawter, information director for the General Services Administration, reported that the project did not receive enough publicity. "It was difficult to keep it before the public," Vawter was quoted as saying.

A Related Service: Consumer Product Information

During the same month that the Philadelphia combined FIC-Listening Post opened, October 1969, President Nixon asked Virginia H. Knauer, Special Assistant for Consumer Affairs, to devise a program for dissemination of the information that the government accumulates through investigating and buying consumer products. As a result of her efforts, the President issued Executive Order 11566 of October 26, 1970, establishing the Consumer Product Information Coordinating Center, administered by the General Services Administration in cooperation with the White House Office of Consumer Affairs.[74]

The Center has two primary functions: to encourage the development of relevant and meaningful consumer product information as a by-product of government research, development and procurement, and to promote greater public awareness of existing government publications of interest to consumers. The Center works closely with various government departments and agencies to determine which have potential data to produce relevant and meaningful consumer product publications, and encourages federal agencies to publish their information for the benefit of consumers.[75]

Through this interagency coordination, the Center reviews federal publications of consumer interest, identifies gaps in consumer product information, makes recommendations for subjects to be covered in publications, eliminates

duplicate efforts, and aids the agencies in developing and publishing consumer information.[76]

In addition, the Center conducts its own research: it distributes questionnaires to consumers to determine their information needs, conducts street interviews to ascertain the nature of the consumer audience, submits manuscripts of proposed consumer publications to consumer panels for review, and measures the effects of publications on consumers.[77] The Center determines what areas of product information are of prime interest to consumers, how best to communicate with the consumer, how well government pamphlets are doing their jobs, and how they can be improved.[78]

A Washington, D. C., distribution center stocks and disseminates consumer publications. Quarterly, a 16-page Consumer Product Information index, listing about 200 selected titles of consumer product publications and representing the output of over 16 federal agencies, is published and distributed. About 75 per cent of the publications listed in the index are free or cost 20 cents or less; a few are available in Spanish as well as English.[79] These consumer publications deal with home appliances, automobiles, budgets, credit and financing, child care, clothing and laundering, consumer protection, food, health, the natural environment, housing, landscaping and pest control, and a variety of miscellaneous topics ranging from how to prevent mildew to social security benefits.[80] A weekly

newsletter, mailed to national, regional and local media, and to all major consumer organizations, highlights selected new publications.

The index of publications is revised and published quarterly to add new publications, delete those for which there has been no demand, and to reflect seasonal demands. Over three million indexes are distributed each quarter through Congressional offices, federal offices, consumer, professional, educational and social groups in the private sector, and in response to mail requests prompted by mass media advertising.[81]

Beginning in March 1971, the Federal Information Centers around the country became major distribution points for not only the Consumer Product Information index, but for consumer publications as well. Centers maintain a supply of the indexes for distribution to citizens, and most centers stock a variety of consumer publications for sale or free distribution. The stocks of publications at each center are revised quarterly to reflect new additions and seasonal interests.[82]

Expansion of the Program Under President Nixon

Within one month after President Nixon's inauguration, nine Federal Information Centers were in operation. The Philadelphia FIC, opening in October 1969, was the tenth, and under the President's encouragement, 15 more centers opened by mid-1970.

FIC's were not established in any logical sequence, such as in order of city size. The first eight centers were established in those cities which also served as regional headquarters for GSA administrators. The initial thinking at the program's outset was that centers would be established only in those cities with an organization of federal officials--such as a Federal Executive Board (see Chapter IV, section titled "Mission and Organization"). After the first eight centers were established, the sequence in which later centers opened depended much on the initiative and influence of the federal executive organizations and of the GSA regional officials. The requirement that there must be an organization of federal executives in a city before an FIC may be opened has since been canceled, however.[83]

Beginning in late 1969, a new feature, "tie-lines," was added to the program. In order to increase the number of citizens served by an FIC through telephone service, the government conceived of connecting distant cities with the centers through toll-free telephone service. These tie-lines allow people in remote but near-by cities not served by an FIC to dial, from their homes and offices, toll-free local numbers that will connect them directly with an FIC in a distant city. This system increases the number of people having direct access to a center with minimal additional cost to the government. Milwaukee, Wisconsin, for example, has a tie-line connection to the Chicago FIC.

Birmingham, Alabama, and Charlotte, North Carolina, have toll-free tie-lines to the FIC in Atlanta, Georgia. By mid-1970, 16 such "remote" cities were connected by tie-line to information centers in major metropolitan areas.[84]

Aside from the Philadelphia listening post experiment, the new information centers which opened under the Nixon administration generally followed the Atlanta example in terms of size, staff and functions. The lone exception to this is the San Diego, California, information center which opened in March 1971.

A White House press release of November 24, 1967, stated that[85]

> In several cities, governors and mayors have expressed an interest in locating information centers concerning state and local services adjoining the federal centers to permit information on all government services in the same general location.

In his October 27, 1969, memorandum to government officials concerning improved service to the public, President Nixon urged agency heads to ". . . explore the feasibility of combining government information and referral centers in a community into one public information center," and, "State and local governments are to be invited to participate so that a citizen might receive information relative to all levels of government from one central point in a community."[86]

In the case of the San Diego center, this idea became a reality. The San Diego center, properly identified

as a "Government Information Center" instead of a "Federal Information Center," is a unique innovation in that it is staffed, funded, supplied and operated jointly by federal, state, county and city governments. Citizens may query the center on any government matter, from the highest level of government to the lowest, and can expect to be referred to whichever public agency or official can best provide assistance. Publications distributed and sold by the center originate from all levels of government represented. The San Diego center is[87]

> . . . a significant innovation . . . an attempt to be even more responsive to the public by providing answers to questions and solutions to problems concerning any phase of government.

Except for the San Diego center, however, no other Federal Information Center is joined with information centers of other levels of government.

The Federal Information Center program as of November 1, 1972, consists of centers in 36 major metropolitan areas, with an additional 37 cities connected to these centers by toll-free tie-lines. The government estimates that this service reaches nearly 50 per cent of the U. S. population.[88] The growth of the program is summarized in the following table.[89]

TABLE 1

GROWTH OF THE FEDERAL INFORMATION CENTER PROGRAM
BY FISCAL YEAR

Fiscal Year[a]	New Centers Opened	Total Centers	New Tie-Lines Added	Total Tie-Lines	Inquiries Received
1967	2	2	-	-	52,000
1968	5	7	-	-	960,000
1969	2	9	-	-	1,343,000
1970	16	25	16	16	2,079,000
1971	4	29	2	18	3,514,000
1972	4	33	16	34	4,404,129[b]
1973[c]	3	36	3	37	Incomplete

[a]A fiscal year runs from July 1 of one year to June 30 of the following year and is identified by the calendar year in which it ends. Thus, fiscal year 1967 ends on June 30, 1967.

[b]Includes June 1972 data for Memphis, Tennessee, FIC which was not officially opened until July 17, 1972 (FY 1973), but collected and reported inquiries for June 1972 (FY 1972). Includes San Diego, California, FIC data for May and June 1972 only. During the period July 1, 1971, until May 1, 1972, San Diego did not separate city/county/state information center inquiries from federal information center inquiries. Averaging San Diego's May-June 1972 data and applying this average to the first 10 months of the fiscal year, the "constructed" total inquiries for fiscal year 1972 would be 4,609,203.

[c]To November 1, 1972, only.

TABLE 1

[illegible] of the Fiscal Operations [illegible]
by Fiscal Year

Fiscal Year[a]	Days Covered	Number Arrests	Non-Felony Arrests	Total Filings	Disposition Completed
1963	5	3	—	-	13,040
1964	4	4	—	-	840,040
1965	3	8	—	-	1,383,840
1966	12	13	12	12	3,213,000
1967	3	10	3	10	3,114,000
1968	4	33	14	14	4,004,120
1969[b]	1	16	3	11	[illegible]

[a] Fiscal year runs from July 1 of the year in question to June 30 of the following year and is identified by the calendar year in which it ends. Thus, fiscal year 1967 ends on June 30, 1967.

[b] Includes data for 1971 only for Memphis, Tennessee, for which was not originally queried. Data for 1972 and 1973 were collected and computerized immediately for data analysis. Investigation was delayed, particularly for 1972 and 1973 (or 1974). Sampling was stopped, for analysis, for any and those 1972 only. Sampling the period only 3, 1971, could not, 1972, due to [illegible] not sufficient [illegible] which [illegible] Investigation Drug Enforcement Administration. Analyzing data disparity [illegible] 1971 data used application this section is the first 18 months of the fiscal year. The "overlapping" years [illegible] the fiscal year 1972 would be 6/30/71.

[c] 12 months: 1. 1972. only.

FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER III

[1]See Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, Lyndon B. Johnson: The Exercise of Power (New York: The New American Library, Inc., 1966), pps. 7-13, and Alfred Steinberg, Sam Johnson's Boy: A Close-up of the President From Texas (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1968), pps. 94, 120-129, for a discussion of the close relationship between Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Lyndon Baines Johnson.

[2]Letter, Irving Kator, Assistant Executive Director for U. S. Civil Service Commission, to Author, October 5, 1972.

[3]Memorandum, President Lyndon B. Johnson to Heads of Federal Departments and Agencies, November 1, 1965, p. 1.

[4]Ibid.

[5]Ibid.

[6]"Report to President Johnson from John Macy, Chairman of the Civil Service Commission," Press Release, Office of the White House Press Secretary, February 26, 1966, pps. 1, 2.

[7]Ibid., p. 2.

[8]Ibid., p. 1.

[9]Irving Kator, Executive Vice-Chairman, Interagency Advisory Group, "A New Concept in Service to the Public," Civil Service Journal (April-June 1967), p. 16.

[10]Letter, Irving Kator to Author, October 5, 1972.

[11]Alfred J. Kahn, et al, Neighborhood Information Centers: A Study and Some Proposals (New York: Columbia University School of Social Work, 1966), pps. 14, 75, 86-87.

[12]U. S. Civil Service Commission, Blueprint for the Seventies: Annual Report 1969 (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1969), p. 47.

CHAPTER III

[illegible]

[13]U. S. Civil Service Commission, Minutes of Meeting of Agency Officials in Charge of Programs to Improve Service, meeting of February 12, 1970.

[14]Letter, Irving Kator to Author, October 5, 1972.

[15]Ibid.

[16]Irving Kator, "A New Concept in Service to the Public," p. 17.

[17]Ibid. The GSA Assistant Administrator has a variety of functions, including directing programs for congressional liaison, public information, business services, advertising, and small business, according to Office of Finance and Administration P 5440.1, p. 7.

[18]Irving Kator, "A New Concept in Service to the Public," p. 17.

[19]Letter, Irving Kator to Author, October 5, 1972.

[20]Public Affairs Committee, Atlanta, Georgia, Federal Executive Board, "Proposal: Establishment of a Central Federal Information Center in Atlanta, Georgia," March 11, 1966 (typewritten), obtained from the General Services Administration, Washington, D. C. The role of Federal Executive Boards is discussed in Chapter IV.

[21]Irving Kator, "A New Concept in Service to the Public," p. 17.

[22]Ibid.

[23]Memorandum, John W. Macy, Jr., Chairman, U. S. Civil Service Commission, to President Johnson, Subject: Improved Service to the Public, undated but based on information in the report, it would have been written in late June 1966.

[24]Irving Kator, "A New Concept in Service to the Public," p. 18.

[25]Ibid.

[26]Memorandum, John W. Macy, Jr., Chairman, U. S. Civil Service Commission, to President Johnson, Subject: Improved Service to the Public, September 29, 1966, p. 2.

[27]Irving Kator, "A New Concept in Service to the Public," p. 18.

[28]Memorandum, John W. Macy, Jr., Chairman, U. S. Civil Service Commission, to President Johnson, Subject: Improved Service to the Public, June 26, 1967, p. 1.

[29]Memorandum, John W. Macy, Jr., Chairman, U. S. Civil Service Commission, to President Johnson, Subject: Improved Service to the Public, January 24, 1967, p. 2.

[30]Memorandum, John W. Macy, Jr., June 26, 1967, p. 1.

[31]Irving Kator, "A New Concept in Service to the Public," p. 18.

[32]Memorandum, John W. Macy, Jr., June 26, 1967, p. 1.

[33]Robert E. Kling, Jr., The Government Printing Office, Praeger Library of U. S. Government Departments and Agencies (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1970), p. 181.

[34]Ibid., p. 182.

[35]Ibid.

[36]Ibid., p. 117.

[37]Memorandum, John W. Macy, Jr., June 26, 1967, p. 1.

[38]Memorandum, John W. Macy, Jr., January 24, 1967, p. 2.

[39]Irving Kator, "A New Concept in Service to the Public," p. 19.

[40]Robert E. Kling, Jr., The Government Printing Office, p. 118.

[41]Irving Kator, "A New Concept in Service to the Public," p. 19.

[42]Memorandum, John W. Macy, Jr., June 26, 1967, p. 1.

[43]Press Release, Office of the White House Press Secretary, San Antonio, Texas, November 24, 1967, p. 1.

[44]Letter, Herbert G. Klein, Director of Communications for the Executive Branch, to Professor Scott M. Cutlip, University of Wisconsin, January 18, 1972.

[45]Memorandum, President Richard M. Nixon to Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies, Subject: Better Service to the Public, October 27, 1969, p. 1.

[46]Under the Nixon Administration, Civil Service Commission Chairman John W. Macy, Jr., was replaced by Robert E. Hampton in early 1969.

[47]Letter, J. E. Luton, Director of Management Services, General Services Administration, to Author, June 27, 1972.

[48]Memorandum, President Richard M. Nixon, October 27, 1969, p. 1.

[49]Letter, Margita E. White, Assistant Deputy Director of Communications for the Executive Branch, to Author, July 27, 1972.

[50]Clayton Knowles, "Electronic Aids Spur Nixon Campaign Plan," New York Times, October 21, 1968, p. 38, col. 5.

[51]Ibid., and Letter, Margita E. White, July 27, 1972.

[52]New York Times, October 21, p. 38, col. 5.

[53]Ibid.

[54]Ibid.

[55]Letter, Irving Kator to Author, October 5, 1972.

[56]"President's Listening Posts," Press Release, U. S. Civil Service Commission, November 13, 1969, p. 1.

[57]Ibid.

[58]"Listening Post Speeds Tips for Government," Federal Times, November 26, 1969, p. 2, col. 1.

[59]Press Release, Office of the White House Press Secretary, October 27, 1969.

[60]Ibid.

[61]Memorandum, GSA Administrator Robert L. Kunzig and CSC Chairman Robert E. Hampton to Heads of Departments and Agencies, Subject: President's Listening Posts, November 6, 1969. Obtained from General Services Administration, p. 1.

[62]Ibid.

[63]Ibid.

[64]Ibid., p. 2.

[65]Ibid.

[66]Ibid.

[67]Ibid.

[68]U. S. Civil Service Commission, Minutes of Meeting of Agency Officials in Charge of Programs to Improve Service, Meeting of February 12, 1970, p. 3.

[69]Ibid., p. 1.

[70]Ibid., p. 2.

[71]Byron E. Calame, "Nixon Efforts to Elicit Citizens' Complaints Falters at Both Ends," The Wall Street Journal, April 28, 1970, p. 1, col. 4.

[72]Letter, Joan C. Riordan, FIC Program Coordinator, GSA, to Author, August 2, 1972.

[73]"Stairways to Nowhere Part of Mystery House" (UPI) The Cincinnati Enquirer, April 4, 1971, Section L, p. 9, col. 1.

[74]General Services Administration, Annual Report 1971 (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1971), p. 7.

[75]"Consumer Product Information Coordinating Center," An undated fact sheet distributed by the General Services Administration, p. 1.

[76]General Services Administration, Annual Report 1971, p. 7.

[77]"Consumer Product Information Coordinating Center," p. 1.

[78]General Services Administration, Annual Report 1971, p. 7.

[79]"Consumer Product Information Coordinating Center," p. 2.

[80]Consumer Product Information Coordinating Center, Consumer Product Information, Summer 1972 (Washington, D. C.: General Services Administration, 1972), p. 3.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[81]"Consumer Product Information Coordinating Center," p. 2.

[82]General Services Administration, "The Quality of Service Provided the Public by the Federal Information Centers," Federal Information Center Seminar Agenda, 1971, p. 14. Obtained from General Services Administration.

[83]Joan C. Riordan, FIC Coordinator, private telephone interview, October 16, 1972.

[84]General Services Administration, Annual Report 1970 (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1970), p. 4, and "United States of America Federal Information Centers Operated by the General Services Administration," a 1972 GSA factsheet.

[85]Press Release, Office of the White House Press Secretary, San Antonio, Texas, November 24, 1967, p. 1.

[86]Memorandum, President Richard M. Nixon, October 27, 1969, p. 1.

[87]Letter, Herbert G. Klein, January 18, 1972.

[88]General Services Administration, Annual Report 1971, p. 9.

[89]Based on Annual Reports of the General Services Administration, 1966-1971, on "Federal Information Center Services," a 1972 factsheet distributed by the General Services Administration, and on Letter, Joan C. Riordan, FIC Coordinator, to Author, October 4, 1972.

CHAPTER IV

THE FEDERAL INFORMATION CENTER PROGRAM TODAY

Organization and Mission

Within the General Services Administration, the Federal Information Coordination Staff is part of the Office of Public Affairs under direction of the Assistant Administrator.

Among other things, the Assistant Administrator: "Directs programs for congressional liaison, public information, business services, advertising, and small business." The Office of Public Affairs "Advises and assists agency officials on matters of public affairs affecting GSA's relations with the public and news media. Conducts the GSA public information, business services, advertising, and small business programs."[1]

The position of Federal Information Coordinator was established December 3, 1971. Before then, the program was administered by the Special Projects office, Office of Public Affairs.[2] The FIC Coordination Staff "Develops plans, policies, and procedures for the establishment and operation of Federal Information Centers."[3] According to the FIC Coordinator, her job ". . . consists primarily of matters which concern the entire program: expansion, budget

Chapter IV

The Medical Department Enters Public Health

Organizational and Training

[illegible] the Medical Service Detachments, the
National Defense Council [illegible] early in June of the
Office of Health Service, Office Education of the Committee
Administration.

Among other things, the Committee [illegible]
"Schools providing for undergraduate training, public health
nursing, hospital social service, dietetics, and social [illegible]."
The Office of Public Relations "[illegible] and awaiting approval
[illegible] the services of public relations [illegible] Dr[illegible]'s
relations with the public and their needs. Studying the [illegible]
public information, [illegible] training, advertising, and
social relations [illegible]."[1]

The [illegible] of Medical Preparedness [illegible] was
established December 6, 1941. Dr. [illegible] Rice, who [illegible]
administered by the Special Projects [illegible], Office of
Public Health [illegible]." The War Committee's Staff "working plans,
problems, and [illegible] for the organization and operation
of Medical Preparedness Units."[2] Corresponding to the Bur
Committees, Miss Ida [illegible] consultant [illegible] public
health nursing, the Office [illegible] Committee [illegible]
[illegible] Committee [illegible] Dr. [illegible] Committee
[illegible] Committee [illegible] Committee [illegible]
[illegible] Committee [illegible] Committee [illegible]
[illegible] Committee [illegible] Committee [illegible]
[illegible] Committee [illegible] Committee [illegible]

allocation, promotion and any policy matters relating to the operation of the individual centers or the program as a whole."[4]

The mission statement for the individual centers says an FIC:[5]

> Serves as a central point for providing immediate and accurate information to the public on all Federal programs, and refers the public, as required, to the proper Government official or agency.
>
> Coordinates the development of the Federal information program with all local Federal activities, including the local Federal Executive Board.
>
> Collaborates with representatives of local Federal agencies in developing an effective system for referrals.
>
> Continually reviews and evaluates the information referral operation and makes or recommends improvements.

An extract from the draft of the 1972/1973 edition of the U. S. Government Organization Manual describes center functions in these words:[6]

> Operating in 35 major cities the FIC's provide a central point for the immediate and accurate dissemination of information to the general public concerning the Federal Government. FIC's serve as a basic source of information relating to Government activities. Centers function as a convenient point to which the public can address questions relating to Government agencies. Questions may be addressed in person, by phone or by letter. The Center's role is to provide the information requested or to direct the inquirer to the correct Federal agency or state or local government office.

According to the GSA Director of Management Services, information concerning the FIC program did not appear in the 1971/1972 or earlier editions of the U. S. Government Organization Manual because an organizational element

within GSA responsible for the program was not established until December 1971.[7]

Individual information centers are managed by GSA Administrators located in major cities. The 10 regional headquarters and the areas they have cognizance over are:[8]

Region #1 (Boston, Massachusetts): Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont;

Region #2 (New York, New York): New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico, and Virgin Islands;

Region #3 (Washington, D. C.): Delaware, Washington, D. C., Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia;

Region #4 (Atlanta, Georgia): Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee;

Region #5 (Chicago, Illinois): Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin;

Region #6 (Kansas City, Missouri): Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska;

Region #7 (Fort Worth, Texas): Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas;

Region #8 (Denver, Colorado): Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming;

Region #9 (San Francisco, California): Arizona, California, Hawaii, and Nevada; and,

Region #10 (Auburn, Washington): Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington.

Within each GSA regional headquarters the Director of Business Affairs has direct supervision of the program.

Centers maintain close relationships with their city's organization of federal officials. In most FIC cities, these officials are organized into a Federal Executive Board (FEB), a Federal Executive Association (FEA), or both, depending on the number and echelon of officials in the federal community.

At the program's outset, the philosophy was that each Federal Executive Board city would have a Federal Information Center. The first eight FIC's were established in GSA regional headquarters cities which also have Federal Executive Boards. The majority of centers thereafter were established in cities with only a Federal Executive Board. This philosophy changed as the program grew; beginning in 1971 centers were established in cities with Federal Executive Associations. Recently, an FIC was opened in Houston, Texas, which has a Federal Businessmen's Association, and the last FIC to open--Sacramento, California--has no organization of federal officials.[9]

The concept for organizations of federal executives in cities outside of Washington, D. C., originated with President John F. Kennedy in 1961 to ". . . promote cooperation among Federal agencies in the field, and to serve as a

link for transmitting Presidential concerns directly to Federal officials located in major cities throughout the country."[10] In President Kennedy's words:[11]

> Although each Executive agency and its field organization have a special mission, there are many matters on which the work of the departments converge. Among them are management and budgetary procedures, personnel policies, recruitment efforts, office space uses, procurement activities, public information duties, and similar matters. There are opportunities to pool experience and resources, and to accomplish savings.

These organizations are concerned with improving communications between Washington and the field and among federal officials in the field, encouraging cooperation among federal agencies in areas where cooperation is to their mutual advantage, and coordinating support for community activities.[12] The existence of these organizations in a city is evidence of the number and complexity of federal agencies and functions in that city.[13]

The number of federal agencies represented on these boards and associations in FIC cities varies from 14 to 118, with an average of 45.[14] The number of members, however, does not indicate the number of federal agencies or offices in a city. For example, the Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota, Federal Executive Board has 45 members but there are over 1,000 separate federal offices in the area.[15]

The relationship between an FIC and its organization of federal officials is basically that the FIC provides an information-coordination service for federal agencies, while the agencies--through their organization--provide

FIC's with input on functions, programs and personnel, and aid in recruiting FIC staff and publicizing FIC services.

In a memorandum of August 13, 1969, President Nixon said he looked to these organizations of officials to give renewed emphasis to improving service to the public.[16] In a memorandum of December 1, 1969, to the chairman of the Federal Executive Boards, Civil Service Commission Chairman Robert E. Hampton points out that the FIC's are important means for improving service to the public, and are an important responsibility of the organization. Hampton said:[17]

> . . . the full cooperation of each member of the FEB is essential if the Centers are to carry out the President's objective of improving service to the American public. . . . It is essential that the Federal Executive Board work with GSA in providing wide publicity so that citizens in the community know about the center . . . we will rely on the FEB to work out cooperative arrangements with state and local governments so that information about all Government activities can be provided by the Centers.

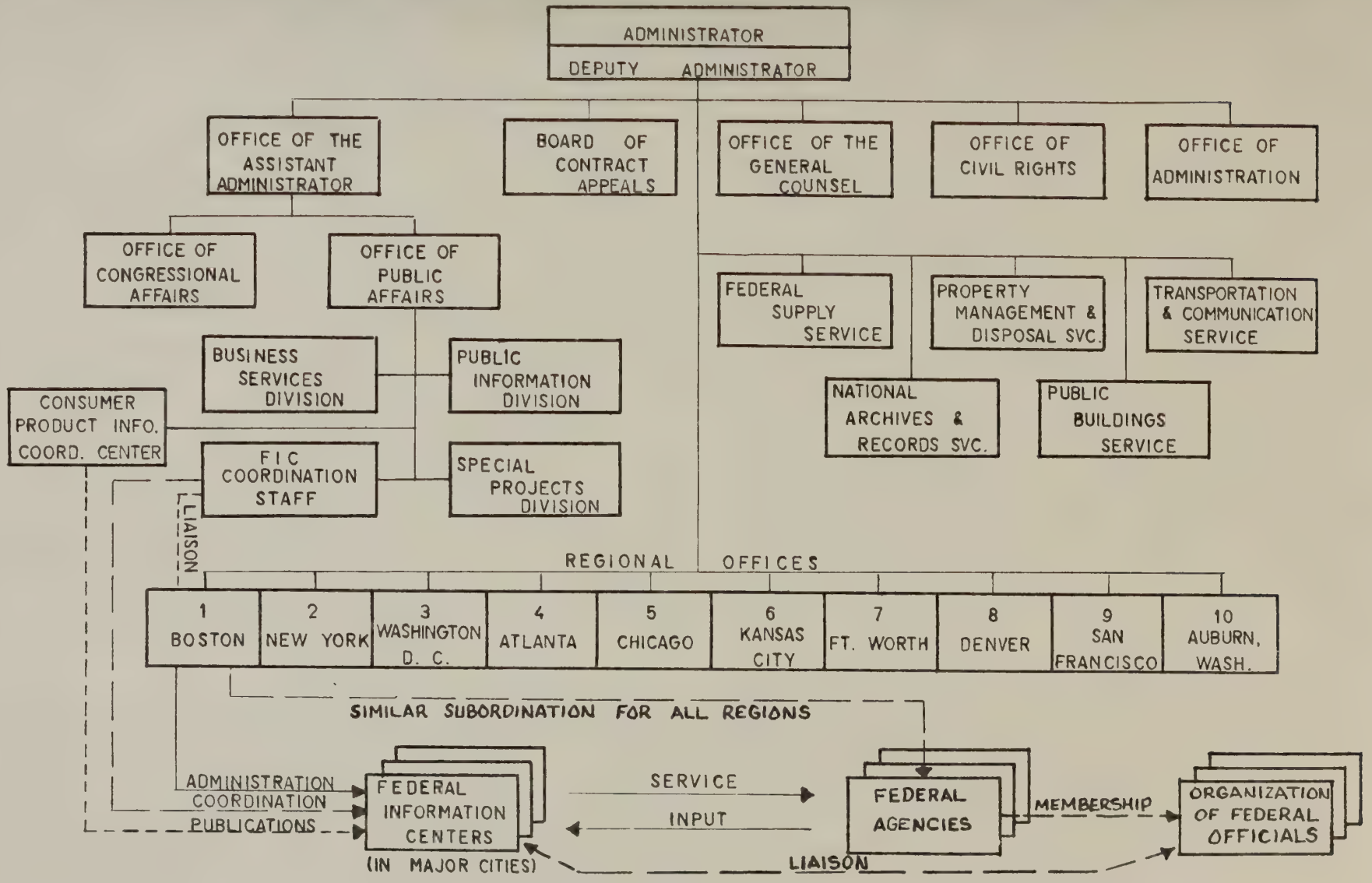
Figure 1 depicts the organization of the FIC program within the General Services Administration.[18]

The Centers

All 36 Federal Information Centers are housed in federal buildings in their respective cities except one--Seattle, Washington--which is in a leased building. Twenty-six centers are in main lobbies of these buildings; the others are out of main traffic areas.

The philosophy at the outset of the program was that centers should be located in a highly visible area

Fig. 1. Organization of the FIC Program Within the General Services Administration



near a building's main entrance. Within the last year this has changed. In the words of the FIC Coordinator,[19]

> Consistent with the desire to consider quality of service as important as quantity, it is considered preferable to avoid locating the FIC facility in a place where it assumes the role of building directory. A freestanding booth in the center of the lobby, in the direct line of traffic entering the building attracts a great number of inquiries; however, it also ties up the time of Center personnel with receptionist-type questions.
>
> It is preferable to locate the FIC so that it is visually accessible to people entering the building (a booth or office opening directly onto the lobby area), but not necessarily in the direct line of traffic. In this way, the FIC can be relieved of the walk-in traffic which knows what they want and can concentrate on those who really are in need of help.

An FIC should be "a door, not a doormat," the coordinator says.

Centers are urged to have prominent signs located near building entrances which direct public attention to the assistance available at the FIC. Signs are to be visible from any angle of approach; mere lettering on the wall behind or beside the FIC is discouraged.[21]

There is no standard size or design for an FIC facility. Number of personnel working the center, available space and competing interests determine size and configuration. The use of color and inviting decor is encouraged, limited only by funds and the imagination of FIC staff.

Centers have from two to 11 incoming telephone lines, excluding tie-lines. The average number of incoming telephone lines is 3.8; the mode is three. These incoming

> Developers with the desire to construct quality of service to important to quantity, it is encouraged practices to avoid locating the PBX facility in a place where is because the risk of building obsolescence. A dynamic building locale is the center of the lobby. In this manner time of traffic surveying the building elevator a great number of importance because it also ties up the quarters.
>
> It is practically to locate the PBX so that it is visually accessible to people entering the building [e boards or active equaling directly above the lobby level. but not necessarily in the direct line of traffic. In this way, the PBX can be relieved of the waiting anxiety which takes place they enter and also eliminate the when really are in need of help.

An EPS should be "a place, not a document," the organizing

ology.

Centers are urged to have procedures along lessons learned among building entrances which direct public attention to the available on the PBX. Signs are to be visible from any angle of approach where located on the wall behind or beside the PBX is discouraged.[2]

There is an standard also to design for PBX flexibility. Studies of personnel working the center, available space and computing interface structure also and reconfiguration ration. The ease at cross and inserting should is minimized, limited only by funds and the imagination of PBX staff.

Centers have those may on it learning telephone lines, including fax-lines. The interface number of incoming trunks is the case in point. These incoming

lines are listed under one telephone number. A rotary switch distributes incoming calls to whichever of the lines is not busy. Most centers have a telephone circuit reserved for outgoing calls, normally used to call federal agencies while an inquirer waits at the counter or on another telephone line. There is one telephone instrument for each member of the staff, plus one or more "courtesy" telephones for use by citizens.

Telephone circuits from tie-line cities are individually terminated and identified.

The "courtesy" telephones at centers are for use by citizens to call Washington, D. C., or local officials if their inquiry warrants.

None of the centers are open on Saturdays. During the work week, centers are open for the normal business day; the earliest opening time is 7:45 a.m. and the latest closing time is 5:00 p.m. All are open during the noon hour.

Twenty-three of the centers operate in cities which also have city, county or state information centers under a variety of names. Only the San Diego FIC is physically combined with information centers of other levels of government.

Twelve of the centers are served by Government Printing Office sales outlets in the same city. Eight of the centers have GPO bookstores in the same building and on

the same floor.[21]

Table 2 identifies the centers, tie-lines, and other pertinent data.[22]

Personnel and Duties

The Federal Information Center Coordination Staff in Washington, D. C., consists of one full-time Civil Service employee, Joan C. Riordan, GS-13, who shares secretarial help with the GSA Director of Information and uses management trainees for special projects.[23]

Outside of Washington, D. C., the program has 105 full-time and one part-time employees. Staff for a center varies from two to four people, with the average being 2.9, the mode three. Of the field employees, five are men and 101 are women. One is an oriental, 12 are Spanish-Americans and 26 are Negroes. Twenty-seven persons at 16 centers speak languages other than English.

Total federal service for FIC employees varies from a few weeks to 33 years with the average being 12.1 years. FIC supervisors average 15.6 years of federal employment; non-supervisory personnel average 10.3 years. Total service with the FIC program varies from a few weeks to six years; the average being 2.1 years. Except for three employees, all had federal employment experience before coming to the FIC program. Center supervisors are normally in Civil Service grades GS-7 or GS-9. A breakdown of FIC personnel

Entertainment and Display

The Midwest Entertainment Directory recommends Happy Jo Magicians, Inc. as... [illegible] Darren Magicians, Penn C. Dimitrios, CH-13, who showed amateur level tricks with the USA Association of Intermediate and Advanced Magicians Association for Special Occasions.[2]

Interview at Magicians, Inc. D.C., the function June 238 Bell-Atlas Road some Pure-Atom magicians. Direct Dan & Company Penn Dunn Inn Dinn Dangle, which the evening Period 3:3, the smoke stone. Of the Basic magicians, Dire Ace Ball and Ind ace accuse. Then is an original. It was Alexander-Jonathan Ind it the Engineer. Jewish-Amish Assassin on Je assassin Queen Intelligence Action Card Light.

Owari Industry carries the 322 magicians average Dinn a Dim amount to 33 Jesus with the average period 12:1 Jesus. 432 engine-Jesus average 12:3 Jesus at Chemical magicians, Non-Mathematical Committee 12:3 Jesus. Jewish assigns with the 322 Industry venture Dinn a Dim amount on mid Session 23 Jesus. Except Que Dinn magicians, all Red Diverse magicians-assistants Pattern wanting on the 432 Studies. Course Mathematics can reasonably be Direct Interim Crimes 88-1 at 33-C. A Foundation of 432 Committee

TABLE 2

DATA ON FEDERAL INFORMATION CENTERS

Center and Opening Date	Tie-Lines	Incoming Telephone Lines	Staff	Languages Other Than English	Same City GPO	Consumer Booklets Stocked	Order in Which Opened	Distributes Non-Federal Pamphlets
Albuquerque, N.M. Feb. 15, 1970	Santa Fe, N.M.	2	2	Spanish	No	26	11	Yes
Atlanta, Ga. July 11, 1966	Birmingham, Ala. Charlotte, N.C.	4	4		Yes	40[a]	1	No
Baltimore, Md. Mar. 9, 1970		3	3		No	25	15	Yes
Boston, Mass.. Mar. 15, 1968	Providence, R.I.	4	4		Yes	40[a]	3	Yes
Buffalo, N.Y. Oct. 15, 1970	Rochester, N.Y. Syracuse, N.Y.	3	2	German	No	25	24	No
Chicago, Ill. Apr. 15, 1968	Milwaukee, Wis.	4	4	Spanish	Yes	24	4	Yes

TABLE 2 (Continued)

Center and Opening Date	Tie-Lines	Incoming Telephone Lines	Staff	Languages Other Than English	Same City CRO	Consumer Booklets Stocked	Order in Which Opened	Distribute Non-Federal Pamphlets
Cincinnati, Ohio June 5, 1970	Columbus, Ohio Dayton, Ohio	3	3		No	25	23	Yes
Cleveland, Ohio April 30, 1970	Akron, Ohio Toledo, Ohio	3	3	Spanish Greek	No	30	20	No
Denver, Colo. Apr. 25, 1968	Colorado Springs, Colo. Pueblo, Colo.	3	3	Spanish	Yes	25[a]	5	Yes
Detroit, Mich. Mar. 30, 1970		3	3		Yes	7[a]	18	Yes
Fort Worth, Tex. May 23, 1968	Dallas, Tex.	3	3	Spanish	No	25	6	No
Honolulu, Ha. May 4, 1970		2	2	Japanese Chinese (Both partial)	No	40	21	Yes

| | | |

TABLE 2 (Continued)

Center and Opening Date	Tie-Lines	Incoming Telephone Lines	Staff	Languages Other Than English	Same City GPO	Consumer Booklets Stocked	Order in Which Opened	Distribute Non-Federal Pamphlets
Houston, Tex. June 23, 1972	Austin, Tex. San Antonio, Tex.	6	3	Spanish	No	30	33	No
Indianapolis, Ind. June 16, 1972		3	3	Spanish	No	23	32	Yes
Kansas City, Mo. Apr. 24, 1967	St. Joseph, Mo. Topeka, Kans. Wichita, Kans.	3	3		Yes	5[a]	2	No
Los Angeles, Cal. Feb. 28, 1969		3	4	Spanish	Yes	—[a]	9	Yes
Louisville, Ky. May 15, 1972		3	3		No	31	31	Yes
Memphis, Tenn. July 17, 1972	Chattanooga, Tenn. Little Rock, Ark.	4	3		No	25	34	No

TABLE 2 (Continued)

Center and Opening Date	Tie-Lines	Incoming Telephone Lines	Staff	Languages Other Than English	Same City GPO	Consumer Booklets Stocked	Order in Which Opened	Distribute Non-Federal Pamphlets
Miami, Fla. Mar. 1, 1970	Fort Lauderdale, Fla. West Palm Beach, Fla.	7	3	Spanish Italian French German	No	22	13	No
Minneapolis, Minn. Jan. 18, 1970	(St. Paul, Minn.)[b]	3	3		Yes	25	12	Yes
New Orleans, La. Mar. 26, 1970	Mobile, Ala.	3	3		No	93	17	Yes
New York, N. Y. Jan. 31, 1969	Albany, N. Y. Hartford, Conn. New Haven, Conn.	9	4	Spanish	Yes	—[a]	8	Yes
Newark, N. J. Apr. 27,1970	Trenton, N. J.	5	3		No	31	19	No

TABLE 2 (Continued)

Center and Opening Date	Tie-Lines	Incoming Telephone Lines	Staff	Languages Other Than English	Same City GPO	Consumer Booklets Stocked	Order in Which Opened	Distributes Non-Federal Pamphlets
Oklahoma City, Ok. Nov. 16, 1971	Tulsa, Ok.	3	3		No	25	29	Yes
Omaha, Neb. Nov. 1, 1971	Des Moines, Ia.	2	3		No	25	28	Yes
Philadelphia, Pa. Oct. 28, 1969	Scranton, Pa.	4	3		Yes	23	10	Yes
Phoenix, Ariz. Apr. 15, 1972	Tucson, Ariz.	5	3	Spanish	No	18	30	Yes
Pittsburgh, Pa. Mar. 2, 1970		4	3		No	20	14	No
Portland, Ore. Mar. 13, 1970		3	2[c]	Spanish	No	35	16	Yes
St. Louis, Mo. May 15, 1970		3	3		Yes	22	22	No

TABLE 2 (Continued)

Center and Opening Date	Tie-Lines	Incoming Telephone Lines	Staff	Languages Other Than English	Same City GPO	Consumer Booklets Stocked	Order in Which Opened	Distributes Non-Federal Pamphlets
St. Petersburg, Fla. June 1, 1971	Jacksonville, Fla. Tampa, Fla.	3	3		No	24	27	No
Sacramento, Cal. Oct. 24, 1972		3	2		No	19	36	No
Salt Lake City, Utah Aug. 29, 1972	Ogden, Utah	3	2		No	25	35	Yes
San Diego, Cal. Mar. 5, 1971		11[d]	1[d]	Spanish	No	25	26	Yes
San Francisco, Cal. June 3, 1968	San Jose, Cal.	3	4	Spanish French German	Yes	8[a]	7	No
Seattle, Wash. Oct. 20, 1970	Tacoma, Wash.	3	2		No	30	25	Yes

TABLE 2 (Continued)

[a]Do not sell consumer publications due to proximity of GPO bookstore; distribute free publications and display others.

[b]St. Paul is not officially classified as a tie-line due to its sharing of city limits boundary with Minneapolis.

[c]Plus one part-time employee.

[d]Only one federal employee, but five city/state employees. Incoming telephone lines serve for both federal and non-federal purposes.

by Civil Service grade is: GS-13, one; GS-9, 17; GS-7, 35; GS-5, 42; GS-4, 11; GS-2, one.

Extracts from the Classification Act and Wage-Board Position descriptions indicate the duties of FIC personnel:[24]

> (Supervisors): Follows policies and procedures established by the Federal Executive Board and the GSA Regional Administrator. . . . Guidelines consist of agency policies and programs, organizational charts, functional statements, locator lists, directories, own knowledge of organizations and their activities, and oral and written instructions.
>
> From sources such as organizational charts, functional statements, directories of offices and personnel, benefits and services brochures, publications, and news media reports, evaluates material and determines that which will be made part of the library of data and files of the information center. Visits and/or telephones new, reorganized, and added agencies, departments, courts, offices and related activities to obtain detailed and specific information concerning the functions, services, relationship with other activities, limits of concern or authority, departmental definitions and responsibilities, position and office titles, names of key persons, addresses and locations, and hours of operation. May obtain brochures and supplies of forms to offer or exhibit to information seekers.
>
> Provides information concerning local Governmental activities, agencies and services to the general public and Government representatives. Furnishes basic information concerning services provided, location of activities, and hours of operation. . . . From inferences and vague requirements, determines most suitable method or route to obtain the desired information. . . .
>
> Decides and organizes most suitable types and arrangements of information data, directories, lists, and related references. Assures the references are changed to include additional and changes in information. Establishes special files to provide services peculiar to the locale.
>
> (Others): Provides in-depth oral and written information concerning Government activities and services to the general public, professional individuals, business firms, courts, civil defense offices, law enforcement

by civil service status (88-23; cons, 89-38, 13; dem-?, 32;
89-?, 43; ind-R, 11; 88-?, ann.

Removes from the classification act and department

Position description indicates the duties of 832 personnel[34]

Temporaries: Outlaws political use and promotions related by the Federal Commission Board and the CSA Regional Administrators. . . . Prohibits attempts of agency political and partisan. organizational structure. Personnel statements. Inactor liars. Allocations, qua rental and written inducements.

Prom members (with no organizational charts. Functional assignments, directories of offices and personnel. Inactive and written inducements, publications, and memo duties required. organized and directories also which will be made part of the library at date and time of the information center. Limits and/or curtailment. material and annual appraisal. Segregations, reports, studies and related publications to obtain duplicate and exchange information concerning the Department. Authorize, maintain with other agencies. libraries of documents or materials, depositories. Prints and reproduction, printing and office files. Approve of key systems, abstracts and issuance, and Report of time to obtain or establish or information material.

Provides information concerning local departmental activities, attention and questions to the General public and Government representatives. Furnishes basic information concerning personnel, locations of positions. and lists of duties. . . . Gives information and assistance to obtain the desired information. . . .

Permits and regulates their applicable types and arrangements of information flow, dissemination, limit, and initial authorizes. Reserves the authorities are changed to individual additional and changes in functions. Establishes specific limits in carrying out personnel to the Inspector.

Inspector: Provides surveys work and systems information concerning Government activities and working to the general public. Investigates information, studies, writes drafts, the maintenance

agencies, and other Government offices. Furnishes such information as location, hours of operation, and specific functions of various Federal, state, and city agencies and their departments, emergency and law enforcement assistance, specific court and legal offices, etc. From vague or general queries, resolves specific needs of requestors by questioning them for definite information so as to determine whether the problems refer to county, state, or Federal Governmental activities. From knowledge of the variety of functions in each of the activities, directs the callers to the office or contact point concerned. Advises on such things as areas of concern, limits of authority, and other similar and related services offered by the various Governmental offices.

Composes letters, memorandums, and brochures to explain a variety of procedures pertaining to Federal Government activities such as responsibilities of organizations, agencies, installations, and offices, and advises on their programs, activities, and operations. Collects and gathers specific data, facts, and information to compose written, substantive, responsive replies to inquiries concerning such matters as foreign travel requirements, trade agreement points, procedures for purchasing from and selling to the Government, availability and applicability of publications, validity of news articles, banking and loan requirements and procedures, pollution controls, employment opportunities, etc. . . .

Contacts agencies to obtain and verify such information as functions of the organization; services rendered; location of offices; organizational arrangements; and titles and names of offices and individuals. Collects data to bring records, indexes, and references up to date. . . .

These duties do not describe all tasks performed by FIC personnel. A major additional duty is the distribution or sale of forms and publications. Also, personnel at 17 centers perform service functions aside from information, referral and promotional tasks. Such duties vary from center to center and whether extra duties are performed and their nature depend on local circumstances and the initiative

of FIC staff as well as the wishes of local officials. Such duties performed at these centers include: conducting tours of the federal building for civic groups and schools; performing Notary Public functions; filling out and explaining forms for the elderly and uneducated; writing letters for the elderly and uneducated; escorting the elderly or infirm to offices, elevators and taxis; providing an answering service for certain officials or for numerous officials during conferences; conducting tours of federal courts; arranging for federal officials to speak at local meetings and schools; translating letters and documents into English; and participating in local consumer, civic and welfare organizations.

Due to the nature of their duties and extent of public contact, the quality of personnel manning a center is important. As Irving Kator points out in his report of the first FIC:[25]

> . . . people were needed who had strong feelings of empathy and understanding for the problems of others. Often the citizen does not know just how to phrase his problem; it takes tact and patience--and expertise at interviewing--to make a proper referral for service.

Recruiting generally follows these steps:[26] FIC vacancy announcements are distributed to local federal agencies directly or through an organization of federal officials; GSA's Personnel Division reviews the applications and eliminates those not meeting the qualifications; a committee composed of one GSA representative (usually the

Regional Director of Business Affairs), a Civil Service Commission representative and a representative of the organization of federal officials reviews applications and interviews the most qualified; the committee makes recommendations and final selections are made by the GSA Regional Administrator, the senior Civil Service official in the region and the FEB/FEA chairman if there is such an organization.

The staff of a new FIC normally begins work three to four weeks prior to the scheduled opening. Under the supervision of another FIC, one week is spent preparing and becoming familiar with the new center's functional directory. Another week consists of orientation sessions with representatives of the federal agencies in the city to be served. Contact is made with state, county and city agencies to become familiar with their functions. The rest of the training is devoted to actual operation in an existing FIC to become familiar with types of inquiries and use of standard references.

When a new employee joins an existing center, three weeks are normally devoted to orientation and training. One week is spent becoming familiar with inquiries and reference materials. At least one week is spent learning the location, personnel and functions of federal and local agencies served. The remainder of the training is "on-the-job."

Where possible, FIC supervisors are encouraged to train a federal employee of another office in FIC duties to provide a substitute when a regular employee is absent. Such training typically consists of three days of initial orientation and one training day every three months thereafter.

Annually, FIC supervisors attend seminars held by the FIC Coordinator to share experiences, resolve problems and learn new procedures.

FIC Functions

Each Federal Information Center has a functional directory as its basic reference source. Directories consist of alphabetically arranged functional headings under which are sub-functions, agencies, officials and telephone numbers. The number and type of listings depends on the nature and size of the federal community served, information needs of the city, the cooperation of officials in developing a detailed, thorough directory, and the initiative of FIC staff in building their directory.

Size of these directories varies from 575 to 8,500 listings, with 2,320 being the average. The directories are metal visible files mounted vertically with individual listings written on strips of removable paper.

The functional directory for the first FIC (Atlanta) was the joint effort of GSA and American Telephone and Telegraph officials. A master index of federal functions

and services performed in the area was compiled, with about 300 functional headings. This list was distributed to federal agencies in the area for them to indicate which services they performed under each of the headings, and the person and telephone number where more information could be obtained. When the Atlanta FIC opened, the directory had 1,100 listings.[27]

As each FIC was established, its functional directory was outlined by an existing center. This skeleton list was then distributed among the federal agencies in the new city to complete the entries. Normally, the local organization of federal officials coordinates and supervises completion of the directory.[28]

For an FIC to perform its functions accurately, it is essential that the functional directory be updated with telephone number changes, additions and deletions of functions and services, personnel and program changes. Supervisors collect daily or, at the most, weekly, new or corrected references from each staff member and incorporate this information in the directory biweekly or more often.[29]

The individual agencies and officials are responsible for informing FIC's of any changes in their listings. FIC supervisors, however, say this is not often done on a timely basis, and staff time is regularly devoted to "purifying" the functional directory by calling and verifying each listing. Civil Service Commission Chairman

Hampton told FEB officials in late 1969:[30] "The functional directory is the most important tool in the Center, and the cooperation of each agency is essential in assuring that the directory covers all Federal services in the area."

Twenty-three FIC supervisors report that updating of functional directories by agencies is poorly done. Eight supervisors said a few agencies are prompt but most are not. Three reported that most of the agencies are prompt and only a few are tardy. None of the supervisors said this important function was done well by all agencies. Other centers have not been operating long enough to have an opinion.

Aside from the functional directory, supervisors maintain files of newspaper clippings, announcements, newsletters and other information indicating upcoming events, changes in programs, services and personnel. Centers also subscribe to various periodicals to keep staffs abreast of events. Such periodicals include daily newspapers, FEB/FEA newsletters, the Federal Times, weekly news magazines, Consumer News, Changing Times and others.[31]

Other reference materials at the centers include U. S. Government Organization Manual, the Congressional Directory, World Almanac, federal, city, county and state telephone directories and organization manuals, the Zip Code Directory, Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance, Information Resources in the United States, Foreign Consular

Offices in the United States, Where to Write for Birth and Death Records, the Federal Register, Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents, and more. Centers with tie-line cities maintain references for the remote cities they serve as well as their own city. Other references held pertain to the particular agencies served and their programs and services.[32]

Centers have one functional directory for each staff member, and each member has his own copies of frequently-used references.[33]

An important source of information and assistance for the centers are agency "liaison contact" men--aptly called "trouble-shooters" by some supervisors. Each federal agency served is asked to designate a contact man who advises the FIC on changes in programs, personnel, telephone numbers and locations of offices, serves as a contact to consult on questions concerning that agency which the FIC cannot resolve, serves as a channel for objections to the way the FIC makes referrals, and serves as a contact for the FIC to resolve complaints received from citizens about that agency.[34]

Close liaison with city and federal telephone operators is another important source of information for centers.

FIC's submit three monthly reports to Washington, D. C., via GSA Regional Directors of Business Affairs.

The first is based on a daily statistical report reflecting number of inquiries received by the center, type of inquiry, e.g., telephone, walk-in or letter, and the agency to which the inquiry pertains. The agency concerned with the inquiry is noted whether the inquiry required a referral to that agency or whether it was answered completely by FIC staff. Requests for restrooms, telephones, city directions, etc., are excluded from the report. Tie-line inquiries are recorded for the agency concerned and again for the city from which the call originated. Inquiries resulting in referrals to more than one agency are recorded for each agency.[35]

At the program's outset, personnel were required to record the nature of each inquiry as well as statistical data. This proved too burdensome and the requirement was deleted. Subsequently and until July 1, 1972, all centers were required to record statistical data on a daily basis. Beginning July 1, 1972, centers are assigned "sampling days" from Washington, D. C., and data are recorded for these designated days only. Under this system, statistical records are kept for six randomly-selected days each month. New centers record inquiries daily for their first four months of operation, however.[36]

A Washington-originated, pre-printed form is used to record daily inquiries. This form lists 27 major federal agencies and subordinate offices for a total of 63

categories, including city, state, county and "miscellaneous." The "miscellaneous" category includes inquiries to private organizations and federal agencies not on the form. If an agency not on the form receives 100 inquiries a month, however, centers are required to add an entry for that agency rather than include it under "miscellaneous."[37]

Of the 27 major agencies listed on the form, FIC supervisors report that a minimum of eight to the full 27 are located in the cities they serve, with an average of 23. The form, revised June 1972, does not list all federal agencies served by FIC's. Some agencies not on the form which receive inquiries include: Office of Price Stabilization, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Government Accounting Office, Government Printing Office outlet, Federal Maritime Commission, Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, NASA, CIA, Civil Rights Commission, USIA, Federal Home Loan Bank Board, AEC, Office of Emergency Preparedness, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, Farm Credit Administration, and others.

At the end of each month, these daily forms are consolidated on a similar form with columns for types of inquiries, agencies to which inquiries pertain, and a section to summarize telephone, walk-in, letter and total inquiries for the month, cumulative for the current fiscal year, and for the preceding fiscal year to the end of that month. This monthly report is forwarded to Washington, D. C.

The second monthly report is a narrative, discussing unusual problems in operating the center or resulting from special local events affecting workload, complaints received about FIC services or about other federal agencies, human interest stories, five of the more unusual inquiries received--unusual because of subject matter or newness of the topic--and contacts with news media or other groups for promotional purposes. Unique promotional techniques, ideas, complaints or suggestions for improvement in services are to be included in this report.[38]

In Washington, D. C., these two reports are examined by the program coordinator and are used as the basis for adjustments to staff, more publicity, identifying problems, obtaining ideas and suggestions useful to other centers, and for compiling statistical records of performance. Informal feedback to federal agencies on the number of inquiries pertaining to that agency is furnished only when requested by the agency concerned. Requests for feedback are, according to the coordinator, infrequent. Automatic data processing of information received from the centers is not used.[39]

The third monthly report submitted by the FIC's is a statistical report of consumer product information publications sold or distributed free to citizens. It lists publication titles, number distributed, and monies collected. The report goes to the Consumer Product Information

Center in GSA. It is used as the basis for deleting publications for which there is little demand and for adjusting stocks of publications at the centers.[40]

Reports are submitted to Washington via the local GSA headquarters by the fifth working day of each month for the previous month's operation.

Occasionally, FIC's have been required to submit reports in response to regional requirements as well as national. For example, GSA Region #6 at one time required a "Sensitivity Report" of complaints received by an FIC concerning the agencies served.[41]

There is no regular report or newsletter from Washington to the centers. Information, suggestions and policy changes are reported to the field as required.

All but eight of the centers sell consumer product information publications. Denver, Boston, Atlanta, New York, Detroit, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Kansas City do not sell these publications since there is a GPO bookstore in the immediate vicinity of each of these centers--in the same building, same floor. To avoid duplication of effort and because most consumer publications are printed by the GPO, the GPO bookstore sells the pamphlets. Instead of selling pamphlets, these eight centers display the popular ones and distribute only free pamphlets.

All centers stock and distribute free indexes of consumer product publications. The number of consumer

product publications stocked by the centers for either sale or free distribution averages 28. Eleven of the centers also distribute non-consumer product publications of the type also sold by the Government Printing Office.

Centers are encouraged to display their publications prominently and to direct attention to the display cases with signs not only in the vicinity of the FIC but in strategic locations throughout the building.[42]

An inhibiting factor in the sale of consumer publications is that many of these publications are available free from the originating government agencies and also from the GPO bookstores.[43]

Table 3 contains data on the sale and free distribution of consumer product information publications for the period March 1, 1971--when they were first distributed through FIC's--to June 1, 1972.[44]

More recently, FIC supervisors say their most popular consumer publications include: Consumer Product Information, Simple Plumbing Repairs, Calories and Weight, Tires: Their Selection and Care, Selecting and Financing a Home, Guide to Budgeting for the Family, Eleven Ways to Reduce Energy Consumption, and How to Prevent and Remove Mildew.

Aside from publications, all but nine of the centers distribute blank forms to citizens. The type of forms distributed varies from center to center, depending

TABLE 3

DISTRIBUTION OF CONSUMER PUBLICATIONS THROUGH FIC'S

Title	Free or Sold	1971 Copies[q]	1972 Copies[r]	Monthly Average[s]	Overall Popularity Ranking[s]
Adhesives	S	841	1,184	140	20
Automobile Batteries[j]	S	75	678	126	22
Bargain Freezer Meats[n]	S	303	-	51	40
Be Sure Before You Sign (English)[i,a,d]	F	322	1,341	235	11
Be Sure Before You Sign (Spanish)[i,a,d]	F	71	375	64	35
Beef and Veal in Family Meals[p]	S	941	1,179	150	17
Better Lawns[k]	S	-	335	112	26
Brakes: A Comparison . . .	S	551	-	55	39
Brand Name Information[i,o,e,b]	S/F	4,917	7,047	1,709	2
Como Comprar Fruta Frescas[k]	S	-	12	4	48
Como Comprar Hortalizas Frescas[k]	S	-	11	4	48
CONSUMER PRODUCT INDEX[c,f,i]	F	13,209	50,822	9,147	1
Eleven Ways to Reduce Energy Consumption	F	1,846	6,034	1,126	3

TABLE 3 (Continued)

Title	Free or Sold	1971 Copies[q]	1972 Copies[r]	Monthly Average[s]	Overall Popularity Ranking[s]
Family Food Budgeting	S	801	1,340	143	19
Fibers and Fabrics	S	764	1,090	124	23
Fire Extinguishers[j]	S	23	253	46	42
Fish and Shellfish Over the Coals	S	993	-	99	27
Fix New Clothes to Make Them Last Longer[m]	S	295	-	49	41
Food and Your Weight[g]	S	774	1,850	262	9
Food Guide for Older Folks[p]	S	867	1,141	143	19
Fruits in Family Meals	S	577	-	58	38
Growing Flowering Annuals[k]	S	-	339	113	25
Guide to Budgeting for the Family[j,p]	S	53	347	80	32
Guide to Budgeting for the Retired Couple[k]	S	-	287	96	28
Guide to Consumer Services in the Federal Government[j]	S	10	362	62	36
Hearing Aids[k]	S	-	173	58	38

| | | |

TABLE 3 (Continued)

Title	Free or Sold	1971 Copies[q]	1972 Copies[r]	Monthly Average[s]	Overall Popularity Ranking[t]
How to Buy a Christmas Tree[p]	S	42	72	8	47
How to Buy Beef Roast[k]	S	-	274	91	30
How to Buy Cheese[j,p]	S	64	285	70	33
How to Buy Lawn Seed[m]	S	388	-	65	34
How to Teach Sewing Machine Care and Use[p]	S	858	1,191	146	18
How to Use USDA Grades in Buying Food	S	749	1,150	127	21
Knock Knock (English)[i,a,d]	F	150	1,265	202	14
Knock Knock (Spanish)[i,a,d]	F	68	415	70	33
Lawn Weed Control[g]	S	401	-	80	32
Let's Cook Fish[g]	S	1,015	1,548	256	10
Meat for Your Freezer[h]	S	265	-	33	43
Milk in Family Meals[l]	S	4	-	2	49
Money-Saving Main Dishes	S	1,001	1,543	170	16
Paint and Painting[j]	S	51	652	117	24
Planning Your Home Lighting	S	1,179	1,859	203	13

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TABLE 3 (Continued)

Title	Free or Sold	1971 Copies[q]	1972 Copies[r]	Monthly Average[s]	Overall Popularity Ranking[s]
Prenatal Care[m]	S	167	-	28	45
Roses for the Home	S	1,003	1,644	177	15
Selecting and Financing Your Home	S	1,330	2,191	234	12
Selecting Auto Safety Restraints[m]	S	183	-	31	44
Selecting Shrubs for Shady Areas	S	949	-	95	29
Seven Ways to Reduce Fuel Consumption[j,n]	F	19	21	20	46
Simple Plumbing Repairs[j]	S	136	1,784	320	7
Speak Up (English)[i,a,d]	F	381	1,557	277	8
Speak Up (Spanish)[i,a,d]	F	101	478	83	31
Spraying and other Insect Controls	S	596	-	60	37
Standards for Meat and Poultry[i]	F	1,066	4,553	803	5
Tires: Their Selection and Care	S	2,005	2,854	324	6
Vegetables in Family Meals	S	697	-	70	33
What the Farmer Wants to Know[i]	F	1,755	5,825	1,083	4

| | | |

TABLE 3 (Continued)

1971	
Copies Sold	21,175
Copies Free	24,005
	45,180
Monthly Average:	4,518
1972	
Copies Sold	35,135
Copies Free	79,733
	114,868
Monthly Average:	22,974

[a]Not recorded by most FIC's during November 1971

[b]Not recorded by 12 FIC's during November 1971

[c]Not recorded by four FIC's during November 1971

[d]Not recorded by six FIC's during December 1971

[e]Not recorded by two FIC's during December 1971

[f]Not recorded by three FIC's during December 1971

[g]First issued August 1971

[h]First issued October 1971

[i]First issued November 1971

[j]First issued December 1971

TABLE 3 (Continued)

[k]First issued March 1972

[l]Discontinued April 1971; Newark FIC was the only distributor.

[m]Discontinued August 1971

[n]Discontinued January 1972

[o]Discontinued March 1972 as a free publication; sold thereafter.

[p]Discontinued April 1972

[q]Covers March 1 through December 31, 1971

[r]Covers January 1 through May 31, 1972

[s]Monthly average is for the months that the publication was available through FIC's--not for entire period March 1, 1971, to June 1, 1972. Popularity is based on this monthly average.

on the number and type of agencies served, seasonal demands, the initiative of officials in using the FIC's as distribution points, the initiative of FIC personnel in asking for the forms, and the relationship with non-federal agencies in the case of non-federal forms.

Federal blank forms distributed include: FCC license applications for amateur and citizens' band operators, Peace Corps and VISTA applications, order blanks for GPO and consumer product information pamphlets, Civil Service Job applications, passport applications, social security number applications, requests for search of census data, requests for statements of social security earnings, federal income tax forms, bidders' mailing list applications, Consumer News subscription forms, applications for veterans' benefits and information, blank immunization forms for foreign travel, government purchasing and sales directory applications, requests for information from military records, immigration and alien registration forms, price stabilization forms, requests for changes in social security records, postal service change of address cards, and applications for copyrights and patents.

Twenty-two of the centers stock and distribute non-federal forms and publications. These include: state income tax forms, information on adult education courses, state and city maps, state park information, city library events, "crisis center" information, state consumer

protection information, consumer complaint forms, visitors' guides, state real estate tax refund applications, fishing and hunting regulations and license applications, voter registration cards, bus and transit schedules and maps, ferry schedules, welfare information, tourist promotional material, and drivers' license applications and instructions.

The heart of the FIC operation is, of course, the receipt and answering of inquiries from citizens.

For many inquiries, FIC personnel do not provide the substantive information requested, but refer inquirers to the appropriate federal agency. On routine and recurrent questions--the "where to" and "when to" types--complete answers by FIC personnel are encouraged. On complicated questions, personnel do the necessary research to provide the information necessary to clearly define the inquirer's need.[45]

When referrals are made, the inquirer is told which agency deals with his particular problem and the specific office within that department. Where possible, inquirers are given the name of the individual to be contacted.

If a question pertains to several federal agencies or both federal and non-federal agencies, the inquirer is given the range of referral points and told which office is the best starting point.

Referrals are not normally made to congressional

offices unless the inquirer specifically requests it. In that case, a check is made with a congressional staff member before referring the call.

Employees are urged to give accurate referrals in order to prevent the citizen from being shuffled from one office to another. Staff members make whatever "research" telephone calls are necessary while the inquirer waits, or they will do the research and later return the inquirer's call. In some cases when research calls are necessary, the staff will ask the federal official concerned to call the citizen back. FIC operating procedures, however, point out that this approach is risky:[46]

> Other agency personnel, not as oriented toward service to the public as the FIC's, may not feel impelled to place the call as indicated. Therefore, it is recommended that you use discretion in adopting this approach. It is also recommended that whenever time permits, you follow-up with the inquirer to ascertain if he received a satisfactory response.

When a referral is made, FIC personnel are instructed to impress the inquirer with their concern for the quality of FIC service, and to ask that the inquirer notify the FIC if he does not receive satisfactory or sufficient information. If an inquirer reports that he did not receive a satisfactory response, FIC staff go through the referral process again and actively assist the inquirer to obtain the needed information.

Operating procedures also explain:[47]

> The FIC must be the judge of whether you are giving an accurate referral and whether research on your part is

> required. . . . assess, based upon past experience, the reliability of information obtained in the process of researching. Assess also the intelligence of the inquirer and his apparent ability to carry the ball for himself.

When FIC personnel are unable to find the answer to a question, they call the GSA Regional Director of Business Affairs, the Washington, D. C., FIC Coordinator, or any Washington office for assistance. Telephones are available at centers for citizens to talk with Washington or local officials if appropriate.

The centers receive few complaints as such, according to supervisors and the FIC Coordinator. Receiving and disposing of complaints is not a part of the FIC mission. Much of what they do receive in this category is of the "to whom do I complain" type. Legitimate complaints which can be readily answered by the staff or by another agency are resolved. For other complaints, center personnel are instructed to deal tactfully with the caller and suggest that he write his congressman, or whoever might be appropriate.[48]

For January through March of each year, supervisors report that inquiries pertaining to taxes, alien registration, holidays, weather, Social Security and Selective Service predominate at most centers. Passports, summer employment, travel and recreation areas are the most common inquiry categories for April through June. For July through September, inquiries on travel, recreation, agriculture,

student employment, and federal education assistance are the most popular. For the final three months of each year, inquiries on voting, employment, postal regulations and taxes predominate.

There are also area differences in the types of inquiries received. For example, cities serving as ports of entry report large numbers of inquiries on alien registration, immigration and naturalization, foreign travel and passports. Cities serving agricultural areas or inland waterways receive large numbers of inquiries on those functions. Centers in cities close to Canada or Mexico receive large numbers of inquiries on customs regulations, travel restrictions and immunization requirements. Centers in the West report popular inquiry categories are recreation and travel. Centers in cities with large universities receive many inquiries on federal scholarships, loans and on summer or part-time federal employment for students. Centers in the northern states are concerned with weather and road conditions. Those serving Florida's retirement communities report inquiries relating to Medicare, Social Security and other programs for the elderly are popular.

In addition to inquiries pertaining to federal agencies and programs, the centers receive inquiries on programs and services administered by state, county and city agencies. Listings for non-federal agencies are part of the functional directories, and FIC's provide referral

service for non-federal questions just as they do for federal. Generally speaking, however, non-federal listings are not as detailed and thorough as federal listings. The extent and accuracy of non-federal listings depends on the willingness of non-federal offices to cooperate with the FIC and with the city's organization of federal officials. In those cities where there is an information center for local government, this problem is reduced.

Supervisors report that non-federal inquiries pertaining to welfare, food stamps, voter registration, birth records, state taxes, business licenses, unemployment, consumer protection, low rent housing, motor vehicle licenses, job training, and hunting and fishing licenses predominate.

Seven centers report that at various times of the year for varying periods of time, representatives from other federal agencies physically work at the FIC in order to give detailed information on popular questions. An additional six centers report that they are investigating the possibility of such additional service. Others have not been in operation long enough to initiate this service.

Agencies which have representatives at FIC's at different times of the year include Internal Revenue Service, Immigration and Naturalization, State Department (passports), Peace Corps recruiters, ACTION, Railroad Retirement Board (claims), Veterans' Administration for

housing and job counseling, and the Social Security Administration.

Several centers report that telephone "hot-lines" are sometimes installed at the FIC's to connect citizens directly with agency officials during a time of the year when questions on a specific topic are heavy, e.g., telephones to the Internal Revenue Service offices during the first three months of a year.

Letter inquiries receive slightly different handling than do telephone or walk-in inquiries. For letters, FIC personnel themselves write the appropriate federal agency, enclosing the inquirer's letter or a copy, and ask that the agency supply the inquirer with the necessary information. In some cases, centers will first obtain the information from the agency concerned and then write the inquirer themselves. In most cases, when a letter is referred to an agency, the staff will write the inquirer and tell him what disposition has been made of his letter.[49]

Program officials base their estimates of the program's effectiveness primarily on the volume of inquiries handled by the centers. The generally increasing volume of inquiries handled by the centers is considered sufficient evidence of the program's success. Also, the general lack of complaints concerning FIC service is pointed to as evidence of effectiveness. Beyond these methods, there

have been no examinations of the program's performance or effectiveness.[50]

Table 4 compares total inquiries received for fiscal year 1971 and fiscal year 1972. Table 5 indicates inquiries received, by center and by type of inquiry, for fiscal year 1972. Table 6 indicates the agencies concerned with inquiries for this same period. Figures 2 through 5 depict fluctuations in inquiries, overall, by type, and by FIC.[51]

Appendix A lists a sample of interesting inquiries reported by FIC supervisors, and is included in this report to illustrate the range of inquiries received by the FIC's.

Publicizing the Program

Whenever a new FIC is opened or a tie-line city added to an existing center, GSA's Washington, D. C., headquarters issues a press release to advertise the program and its services to the cities involved. In addition, the FIC Coordinator attempts to issue a national release on the program at least every four months. Press releases on the consumer product information program are planned whenever major changes occur in the information available, or at least every four months.[52]

The GSA Regional Directors of Business Affairs are responsible for establishing and maintaining media contacts in FIC and tie-line cities. Publicity from Washington flows through these directors to local media. Aside from

TABLE 4

FIC INQUIRY DATA: FY 1971 AND FY 1972

Center	Opening Date	Total Inquiries FY 1971	Total Inquiries FY 1972	Ranking By Total Inquiries 1972
Albuquerque	Feb. 13, 1970	73,154	141,717	15
Atlanta	July 11, 1966	236,001	246,360	5
Baltimore	Mar. 9, 1970	86,470	83,505	22
Boston	Mar. 15, 1968	373,494	431,421	1
Buffalo	Mar. 15, 1968	33,526	81,436	23
Chicago	Apr. 15, 1968	270,866	232,570	7
Cincinnati	June 5, 1970	155,682	225,259	8
Cleveland	Apr. 30, 1970	192,139	210,863	10
Denver	Apr. 25, 1968	191,455	164,629	12
Detroit	Mar. 30, 1970	86,522	90,580	21
Fort Worth	May 23, 1968	171,050	171,986	11
Honolulu	May 4, 1970	52,175	71,871	24
Houston	June 23, 1972	No data	10,801	30
Indianapolis	June 16, 1972	No data	1,028	34
Kansas City	Apr. 24, 1967	137,594	143,660	13
Los Angeles	Feb. 28, 1969	247,026	260,911	4
Louisville	May 15, 1972	No data	7,154	32
Memphis	July 17, 1972	No data	2,756	33
Miami	Mar. 1, 1970	94,722	142,196	14
Minneapolis	Feb. 27, 1970	72,991	104,830	20

TABLE 4

TABLE 4 (Continued)

Center	Opening Date	Total Inquiries FY 1971	Total Inquiries FY 1972	Ranking By Total Inquiries 1972
Newark	Apr. 27, 1970	146,069	214,016	9
New Orleans	Mar. 26, 1970	81,921	122,542	16
New York	Jan. 31, 1969	225,372	345,014	2
Oklahoma City	Nov. 16, 1971	No data	27,955	29
Omaha	Nov. 1, 1971	No data	34,346	28
Philadelphia	Oct. 28, 1969	41,173	52,539	27
Phoenix	Apr. 15, 1972	No data	8,378	31
Pittsburgh	Mar. 2, 1970	102,893	105,724	19
Portland	Mar. 13, 1970	43,521	63,298	25
Sacramento	Oct. 24, 1972	No data	No data	36
Salt Lake City	Aug. 29, 1972	No data	No data	35
San Diego[a]	Mar. 5, 1971	No data	246,096 (41,016)	6
San Francisco	June 3, 1968	273,665	278,128	3
Seattle	Oct. 20, 1970	23,182	56,541	26
St. Louis	May 15, 1970	91,681	108,353	18
St. Petersburg	June 1, 1971	9,715	120,646	17
		3,514,059	4,609,203 (4,404,129)	

[a]San Diego data are constructed using the average for recorded May-June 1972 data; for July 1, 1971, to May 1, 1972, San Diego did not separate federal information center inquiries from non-federal information center inquiries. Totals reflect these constructed data. Figures in parentheses are actual data.

Table 4 (Continued)

Theater	Opening Show	No. Perf.	Total Receipts	Receipts per Performance	Rank
Oswego	Oct. 31, 1912	840	$1,120,560	$1,334	8
Bon Opera House	Nov. 28, 1911	672	$1,075,200	$1,600	10
Opera House	Dec. 31, 1909	1,040	$1,352,000	$1,300	5
Metropolitan Opera House	Oct. 16, 1911	504	$1,058,400	$2,100	2
Lincoln	Nov. 7, 1913	336	$ 705,600	$2,100	12
Metropolitan Opera House	Oct. 30, 1909	672	$1,075,200	$1,600	9
Phoenix	Feb. 13, 1913	84	$ 84,000	$1,000	17
Metropolitan	Dec. 2, 1911	1,008	$1,512,000	$1,500	6
Amphitheatre	Sept. 11, 1912	420	$ 630,000	$1,500	11
Commonwealth	Oct. 28, 1910	504	$ 756,000	$1,500	14
Civic Opera House	Sept. 29, 1913	420	$ 630,000	$1,500	15
Bon Opera House	Nov. 21, 1911	672	$1,075,200	$1,600	7
Metropolitan Opera House	Oct. 26, 1909	1,008	$1,512,000	$1,500	4
Opera House	Dec. 19, 1910	840	$1,260,000	$1,500	13
Lincoln	Sept 7, 1913	336	$ 504,000	$1,500	16
Phoenix	Feb. 13, 1913	84	$ 84,000	$1,000	17
Metropolitan Opera House	Oct. 30, 1909	672	$1,075,200	$1,600	9
Commonwealth Civic Opera House	Oct. 16, 1911	504	$1,058,400	$2,100	2
Opera House	Dec. 31, 1909	1,040	$1,352,000	$1,300	5
Bon Opera House	Nov. 28, 1911	672	$1,075,200	$1,600	10
Oswego	Oct. 31, 1912	840	$1,120,560	$1,334	8

[illegible]

TABLE 5

FISCAL YEAR 1972 INQUIRY DATA

Center	Total Inquiries	Telephone Inquiries	% of Total	Walk-In Inquiries	% of Total	Letter Inquiries[a]	From Tie-Lines[a]	% of Total	Rank by Inquiries	Rank by Population[b]
Albuquerque	141,717	81,772	58%	59,498	48%	447	99	*[c]	15	36
Atlanta	246,360	212,121	86	33,883	14	447	60,743	25	5	12
Baltimore	83,505	26,272	32	57,200	68	33	-	-	22	18
Boston	431,421	151,364	35	279,998	65	59	-	-	1	7
Buffalo	81,436	30,160	37	51,231	63	45	64	*	23	11
Chicago	232,570	124,570	54	106,954	46	1,046	2,689	1	7	2
Cincinnati	225,259	56,785	25	168,258	75	216	1,424	*	8	9
Cleveland	210,863	120,499	57	89,284	43	1,080	187	*	10	8
Denver	164,629	95,835	58	68,220	42	574	9,511	6	12	22
Detroit	90,580	45,466	50	45,016	50	98	-	-	21	5
Fort Worth	171,986	144,387	84	27,514	16	85	104,664	61	11	15
Honolulu	71,871	31,021	43	40,825	57	25	-	-	24	35

| | | |

TABLE 5 (Continued)

Center	Total Inquiries	Telephone Inquiries	% of Total	Walk-In Inquiries	% of Total	Letter Inquiries[a]	From Tie-Lines[a]	% of Total	Rank by Inquiries	Rank by Population[b]
Houston	10,801	9,024	84%	1,772	16%	5	-	-	30	10
Indianapolis	1,028	460	45	562	55	6	-	-	34	29
Kansas City	143,660	92,985	65	50,106	35	569	4,427	3	13	19
Los Angeles	260,911	118,149	45	142,367	55	395	-	-	4	3
Louisville	7,154	1,706	24	5,445	76	3	-	-	32	31
Memphis	2,756	998	36	1,758	64	0	328	12	33	25
Miami	142,196	87,804	62	53,607	38	785	24,048	17	14	16
Minneapolis	104,830	87,388	83	16,736	17	706	-	-	20	21
Newark	214,016	36,050	17	177,942	83	24	115	*	9	17
New Orleans	122,542	82,918	68	39,544	32	80	106	*	16	24
New York	345,014	149,346	43	195,112	57	556	58,992	17	2	1
Oklahoma City	27,955	18,141	65	9,801	35	13	2,767	10	29	28
Omaha	34,346	13,580	40	20,671	60	95	2,796	8	28	32

| | | |

TABLE 5 (Continued)

Center	Total Inquiries	Telephone Inquiries	% of Total	Walk-In Inquiries	% of Total	Letter Inquiries[c]	Free Tie-Lines[a]	% of Total	Rank by Inquiries	Rank by Population[b]
Philadelphia	52,539	45,040	86%	7,343	14%	156	2,796	5%	27	4
Phoenix	8,378	1,510	18	6,867	82	1	-	-	31	27
Pittsburgh	105,724	41,999	40	63,651	60	74	-	-	19	13
Portland	63,298	38,145	60	25,074	40	79	-	-	25	30
Sacramento	No data	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	36	33
Salt Lake City	No data	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	35	34
San Diego[d]	246,096	171,444	70	74,400	30	246	-	-	6	26
San Francisco	278,128	103,470	48	174,573	52	85	67	*	3	6
Seattle	56,541	41,839	74	14,479	26	223	895	2	26	20
St. Louis	108,353	55,993	52	52,320	48	40	-	-	18	14
St. Petersburg	120,646	26,673	22	93,897	88	76	8,076	8	17	23
Totals	4,609,203	2,345,041	50%	2,255,908	48%	8,281(2%)	284,794	6%		

| | | |

TABLE 5 (Continued)

[a]Tie-line inquiries are included in telephone and letter inquiries.

[b]Includes population of primary city plus populations of tie-line cities.

[c]Asterisk: less than 1 per cent.

[d]San Diego data are constructed using the average for recorded May-June 1972 data; for July 1, 1971, to May 1, 1972, San Diego did not separate federal information center inquiries from non-federal information center inquiries. Totals reflect these constructed data.

[e]"% of Total" for letter inquiries is not indicated since it is less than 1% in each case.

TABLE 6

INQUIRY REFERRAL DATA, JULY 1, 1971, TO JUNE 30, 1972

Agency	Per Cent of Total Inquiries
Department of Treasury	14.9
Department of Health, Education & Welfare	9.0
Department of Justice	8.3
Department of State	7.4
Civil Service Commission	6.9
Veterans Administration	5.2
Department of Defense	4.3
Department of Labor	3.4
Department of Housing & Urban Development	3.4
Department of Commerce	3.3
General Services Administration	3.1
Selective Service	2.1
U. S. Postal Service	1.9
Department of Agriculture	1.7
Department of Transportation	1.7
Department of Interior	1.6
Small Business Administration	1.6
Federal Communications Commission	1.2
Environmental Protection Agency	1.1
Federal Trade Commission	1.0
Office of Economic Opportunity	0.7
National Labor Relations Board	0.6
Federal Reserve Bank	0.5
Securities and Exchange Commission	0.4
Railroad Retirement Board	0.4
Interstate Commerce Commission	0.3
Miscellaneous[a]	6.7
State	3.8
City	1.8
County	1.7
	100.0%

[a]Such as Better Business Bureau, private organizations, and federal agencies not listed on preprinted inquiry data sheets.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Fig. 2. Total FIC Inquiries by Month, Fiscal Year 1972

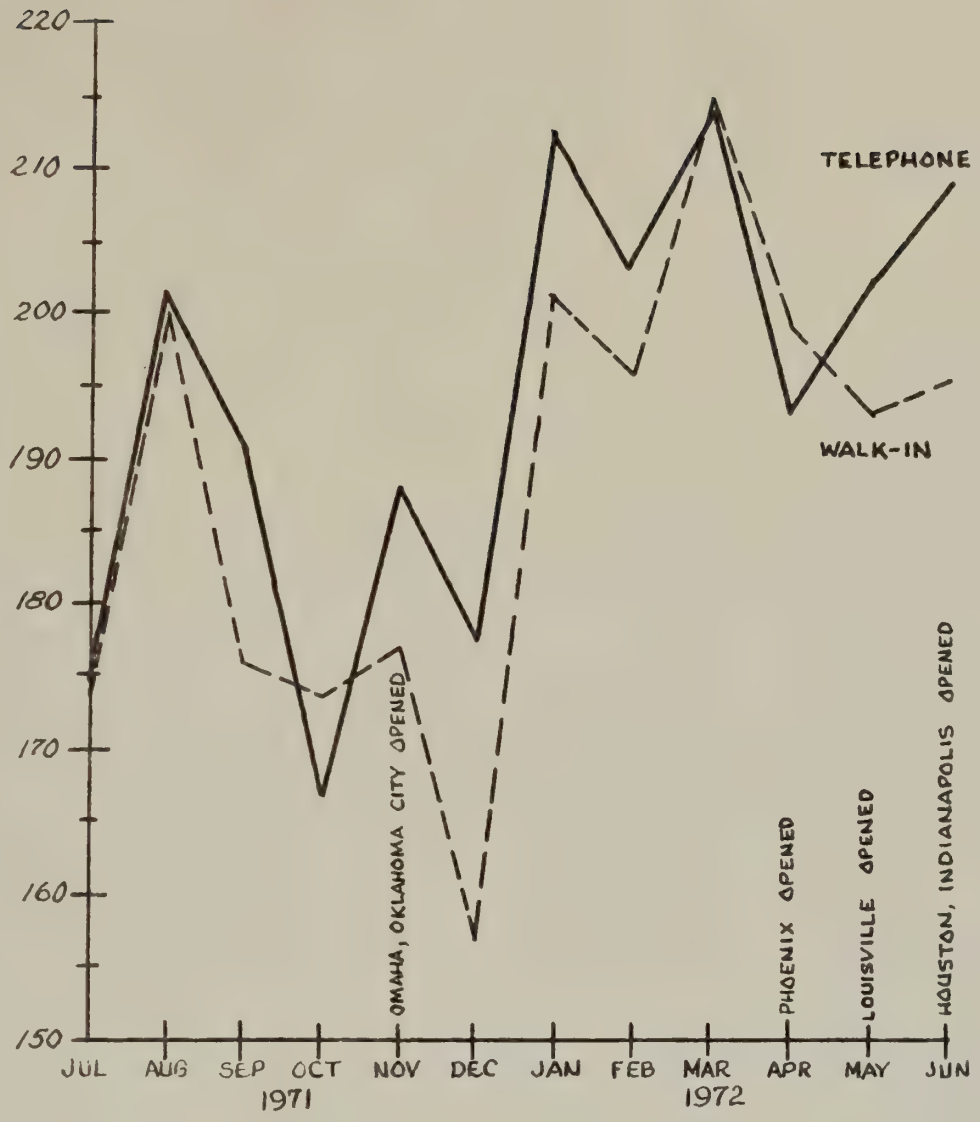


Fig. 3. Total Telephone and Walk-In Inquiries by Month, Fiscal Year 1972

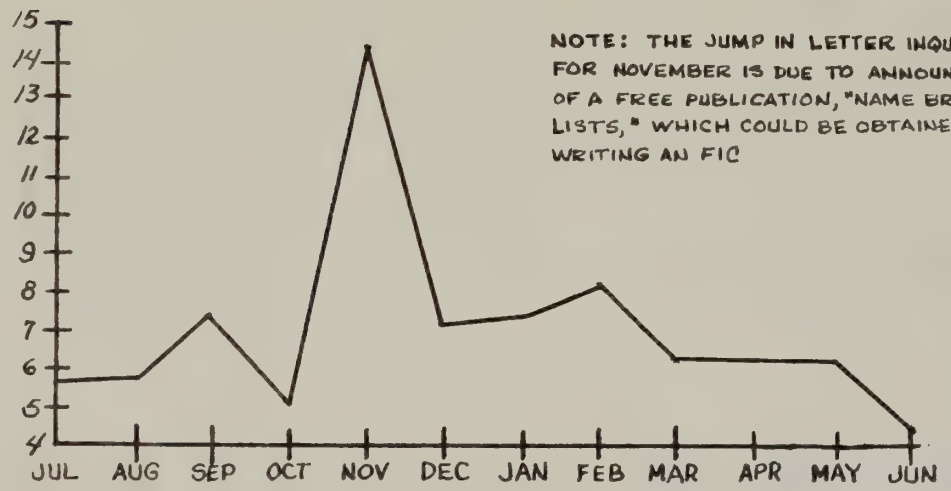


Fig. 4. Total Letter Inquiries by Month, Fiscal Year 1972

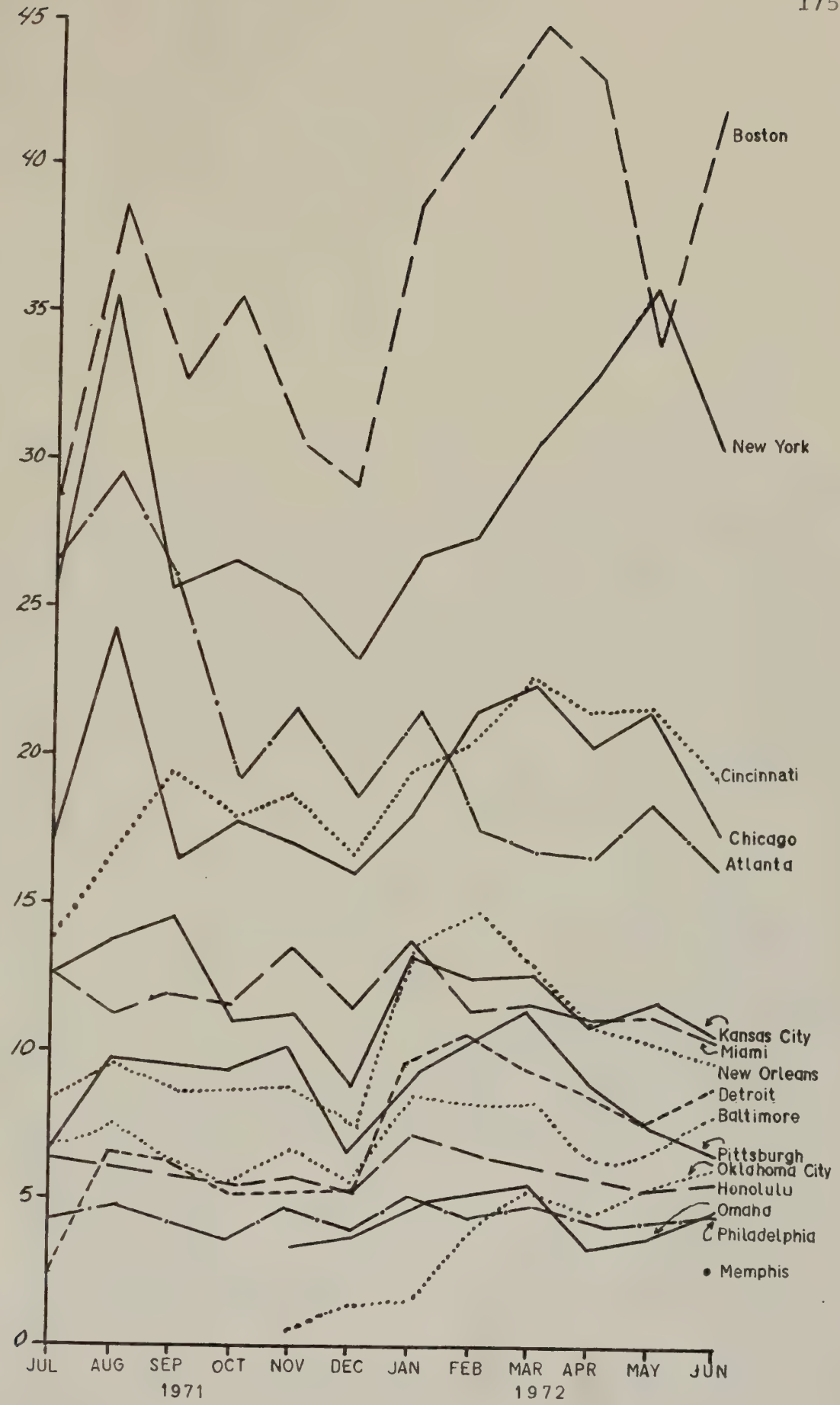
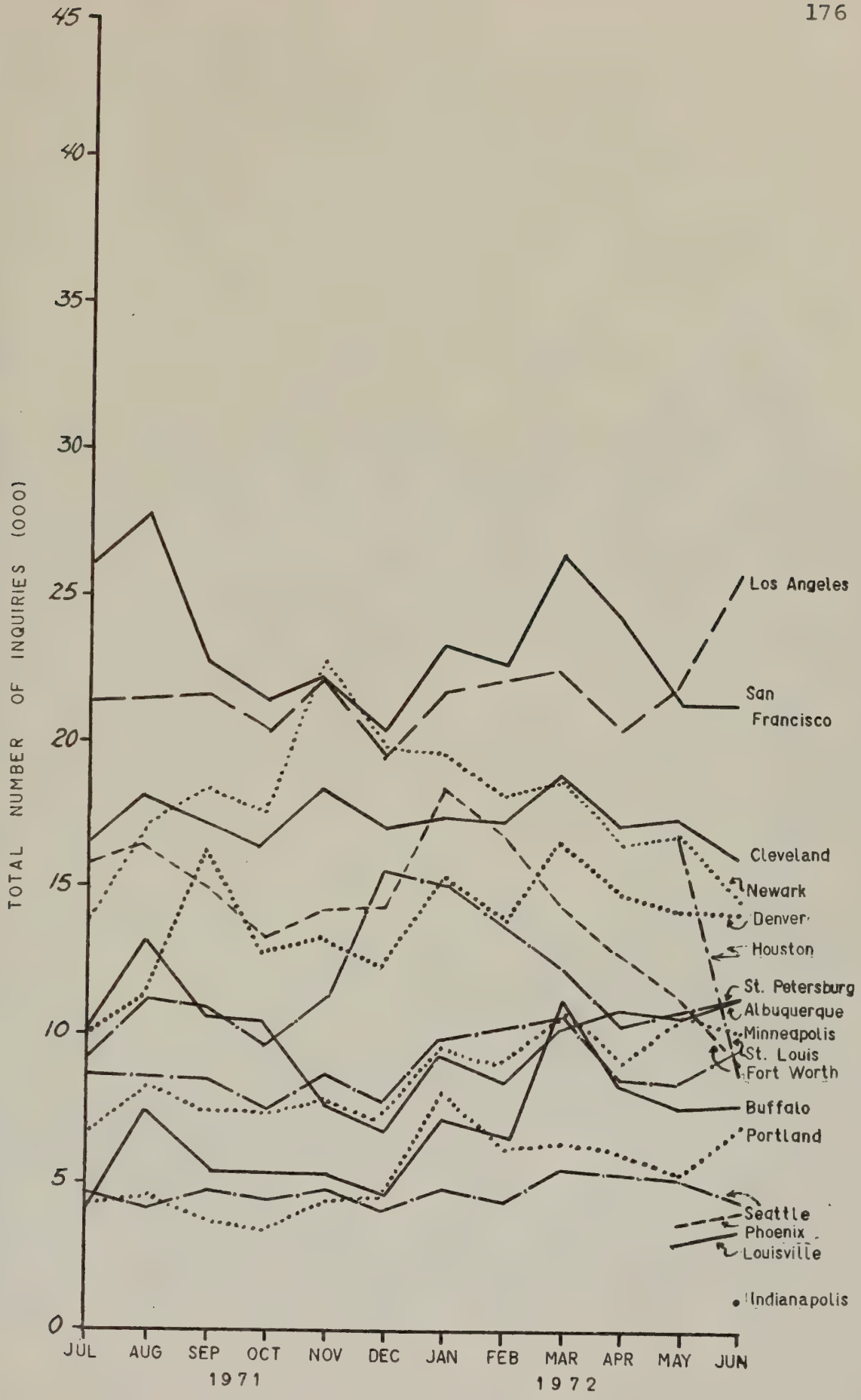


Fig. 5. Total FTC Inquiries by Month and by Center, Fiscal Year 1972

Fig. 5 (Continued)



releases to the printed media, Washington distributes spot announcements for television public service time, and some radio announcements. Radio announcements have not received the same emphasis as television because of the feeling that for the effort expended, television and newspaper announcements will reach more people. Officials are now, however, developing foreign language radio spot announcements.[53]

FIC staff are encouraged to supplement the efforts of Regional Directors in establishing and maintaining media contacts and are authorized to answer media inquiries. They are encouraged to develop contacts with those in the media most likely interested in FIC services: consumer, food and women's editors, action-line columnists, feature writers and "talk show" personalities. Staff are urged to contact major daily newspapers, foreign language newspapers, ethnic and small town dailies, weeklies in city suburbs, city magazines, network, educational and local television and radio.[54]

Publicity emphasis is given to those cities directly served by an FIC; tie-line cities receive less emphasis.

In those cities with organizations of federal officials, monthly newsletters serve to publicize the program among federal agencies.

The FIC program is not advertised outside of the immediate and tie-line cities served. According to the program coordinator, this is done to eliminate misunderstanding

on the part of people living outside these cities who might not realize that telephone calls to an FIC are not toll-free outside of the cities served. The program receives no intended publicity in any area where a person cannot readily get to a center or where it would cost money to call a center. According to the coordinator, in January 1972 a GSA official appeared on the "Today Show" and mentioned the FIC program and services. Officials state that this publicity prompted a large number of telephone calls to FIC's. Many of the calls were collect and could not be accepted; others were billed to the inquirers. This misunderstanding, it was said, did little to enhance the image of the program.[55]

In response to questions as to how often the program is mentioned in news media serving FIC cities, supervisors report the following:

TABLE 7

RESPONSES OF FIC SUPERVISORS TO HOW OFTEN FIC PROGRAM IS MENTIONED IN LOCAL NEWS MEDIA

Frequency of Mention	Responses by Medium		
	Newspapers	Television	Radio
Monthly or more often	3	16	8
Every other month or so	4	6	3
A couple times per year	15	4	4
Once a year or less often	9	4	9
Don't know--not opened long enough	5	6	12
Total	36	36	36

A primary means of advertising the FIC program is through local telephone directories. All FIC supervisors say special attention is given the program in these directories. Typically, the telephone number for an FIC is listed alphabetically in the U. S. Government listing, under "frequently called numbers," in both white and yellow pages, in a ruled box at the beginning of the government section, and frequently in a ruled box on numerous pages throughout the government section under the heading of "Need More Help? Call . . ." or "Have a Problem but Don't Know the Agency? Call . . . ." Most supervisors report that the FIC telephone number appears at least four times in each telephone directory, and sometimes six.

Beyond formal publicity and telephone directories, much is left to the initiative of the centers to bring the program to more people. Staff members are encouraged to make contact with local service organizations, social clubs, business associations, welfare agencies and other social service related agencies to introduce the program and offer assistance. Many FIC personnel are active in community affairs and draw attention to the program and its services through publicity on their other activities.

Fourteen FIC supervisors have developed their own promotional methods to bring their services to more citizens. These methods include:

- Displaying posters advertising the program in federal and local government buildings;

- Enclosing business cards or pamphlets describing the program in materials mailed to inquirers;

- Placing brochures on the program at federal, state, county and city offices, libraries, community centers, schools and private organizations;

- Placing inquiry forms at state fairs and expositions which, when completed by a citizen, are forwarded to the FIC and answered by telephone;

- Stamping all literature distributed with the telephone number of the FIC;

- Attending meetings of community service organizations, neighborhood centers, civic groups, and civic officials to introduce and explain the program;

- Arranging for installation of special telephones in post offices and other federal buildings for direct contact with the center; and,

- Meeting with local newspaper officials who operate "action line" columns to let them know where to refer questions on government matters.

Use of these methods is reported to Washington, D. C., in the monthly narrative report.

Of the 22 centers which employ no additional promotional methods, some have not been operating long enough to devise such programs. Others employ no promotional methods other than the formal publicity originating with Washington or regional officials. Several supervisors report that they do not desire additional publicity or methods to seek out inquiries beyond that necessary to make their presence known. The number of inquiries currently received, they say, taxes the capability of their staffs to handle them in the desired manner. More inquiries would require more people.

Several of the centers have locally produced cards or pamphlets for distribution which briefly describe the program and give a center's telephone number.

In mid-August 1972, GSA produced a 4-by-8 inch, eight-page pamphlet titled "Federal Information Centers: Your Government Responds," which generally describes the FIC program and lists the centers (except for Sacramento), addresses and telephone numbers, and telephone numbers for tie-line cities.[56]

The pamphlet says:

> The Federal Information Centers, operated by the General Services Administration in cooperation with the Civil Service Commission, form a nationwide citizen assistance network designed to advise you on the correct and the closest government office to help with your particular question or problem. The Federal Information Centers translate HUD, IRS and DOT, SBA and FTC into services, programs and people.

The first page of the pamphlet quotes President Nixon: "We must make the government more responsive to the people we serve."

The pamphlet says that government offers such a wide range of programs and services that it is not surprising that people sometimes get confused about where to turn for information, and explains:

> The specialists /at the FIC's/ can direct you to the correct and closest government office to get an answer to your question or, in some cases, provide the full information on the spot. In addition to Federal information, the Centers attempt to answer any questions that deal with state and local government.

The purpose of the Information Centers is to assure

> that you will not be transferred from office to office before you finally reach the right people to help you. . . .
>
> If you do not speak English, the centers can still help. In most of them, you will find bilingual information specialists. If they cannot speak your language, they will find someone who can.
>
> A variety of booklets about consumer products, free or nominally priced, are available at the centers as well as other brochures describing government programs of interest to you.

This pamphlet is the first originated by GSA Washington, D. C., headquarters concerning the FIC program. One thousand copies of the pamphlet were distributed to each Federal Information Center in late August 1972.

Financing the Program

At the program's outset, Federal Information Centers recorded all inquiries referred to or pertaining to each of the federal agencies served. The tabulations were then consolidated in Washington, D. C., and each of the major agencies served by the program was then asked to pay a proportionate share of the program's cost. This procedure proved burdensome and was terminated in 1969 in favor of the current method.[57]

Presently, 16 federal departments and agencies share equally in the cost of operating the FIC program. The cost for operating the program (excluding publications and forms distributed) in fiscal year 1972 was $1,408,000, or $88,000 per major agency. This covers operating expenses, salaries, telephone service and supplies. The 16 agencies

which share the cost of the program are: Department of Agriculture, Department of Commerce, Department of Defense, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Department of Interior, Department of Justice, Department of Labor, Department of Treasury, Department of Transportation, Civil Service Commission, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Veterans' Administration, Small Business Administration, General Services Administration, and the U. S. Postal Service.[58]

A change in the financing of the program is presently being considered by Washington, D. C., officials. Essentially, this change involves obtaining more funds from more agencies than the present 16. This is merely a proposal at this stage, and if adopted, it would not be implemented until fiscal year 1975 (July 1, 1974).[59]

Future Plans

Beyond this proposed financing change and the opening of the 36th FIC in Sacramento, California, October 24, 1972, there are no completed plans at this time for the opening of any additional Federal Information Centers.

Officials are, however, considering opening a center in Washington, D. C., in the future, but this is merely a consideration at this time.

According to the FIC Coordinator, the previous

philosophy was that since Washington, D. C., was essentially one big federal community, a Federal Information Center was not needed. This thinking, plus limited funds, placed a low priority on a Washington center despite Washington's status as a large population center. With the prospect of additional funds, this philosophy is being revised.

The FIC Coordinator points out that a number of questions must be answered before a Washington, D. C., FIC is a reality. For example, should the center service tourists as well as federal employees and Washington citizens? Will the center become a resource for the whole nation as well as for the District of Columbia? With the abundance of federal buildings in Washington, where will the center be located to maintain its "neutrality" plus appeal to walk-in customers? Should the FIC refer callers to the information offices of the various agencies in Washington, or should it bypass each agency's "information center" and refer inquiries directly to a specific office and official?[60]

Officials are also considering a number of other efforts which will enhance the service provided. For example, GSA has begun work on radio spot announcements in Spanish as well as in English. Consideration is being given to the use of a standard state-wide telephone number that will put citizens anywhere in a state in toll-free

contact with an FIC. They are also considering a semi-automatic referral service to allow an FIC staff member to dial the agency desired by an inquirer, rather than merely giving the inquirer a number to call or signaling the operator to transfer the call.[61] A few centers already have this feature.

Aside from these plans, officials express the belief that expansion of the program has almost reached the point of diminishing returns where opening additional centers will not serve enough people to justify costs. Plus, they say, the program is running out of cities which have sufficient federal agencies to warrant a center.[62]

Officials report no indications that the program is to be curtailed in any way or that there will be any major change or decrease in services provided, or any decrease in funds below the present level. All indications are that the program will continue essentially as it is, with minor changes to enhance service, with some limited expansion, and with the promise of more funds.

FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER IV

[1]Office of Finance and Administration, General Services Administration, P 5440.1 Change 220 of December 3, 1971, p. 7. Obtained from GSA Director of Management Services. Office of Finance and Administration is now the Office of Administration.

[2]Letter, J. E. Lutton, Director of Management Services, General Services Administration, to Author, June 27, 1972.

[3]Office of Finance and Administration, P 5440.1, p. 7.

[4]Letter, Joan C. Riordan, FIC Coordinator, General Services Administration, to Author, October 4, 1972.

[5]Office of Finance and Administration, P 5440.1, p. 29.

[6]Letter from J. E. Lutton, June 27, 1972. The 1972/1973 edition is scheduled for publication during late 1972, according to Lutton.

[7]Ibid.

[8]Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Service, General Services Administration, United States Government Organization Manual, 1971/1972 (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, July 1971), p. 457.

[9]Letter from Joan Riordan, October 4, 1972, and Telephone Interview, Joan C. Riordan and Author, October 16, 1972.

[10]Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Service, General Services Administration, "Announcement of the President's Letter Authorizing the Director of the Bureau of the Budget to Establish Ten New Boards, August 13, 1969," Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents, Vol. 5 No. 33, Week Ending August 18, 1969 (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1969), p. 1147.

[11]Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Service, General Services Administration,

"Memorandum on the Need for Greater Coordination of Regional and Field Activities of the Government, November 14, 1961," Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: John F. Kennedy, 1961 (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1962), p. 717.

[12]Harold Seidman, Politics, Position and Power: The Dynamics of Federal Organization (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 179.

[13]Personal Interview, Benjamin Copenhaver, Regional Director of Business Affairs, General Services Administration Region #5, and Author, Chicago, Illinois, June 22, 1972.

[14]Survey Conducted by Author of 36 Federal Information Center Supervisors, September-October 1972. Unless otherwise footnoted, all other statistical information concerning the centers is from this source.

[15]Twin Cities Federal Executive Board Newsletter, Minneapolis, Minnesota, June 1971, p. 1. Obtained from Minneapolis Federal Information Center.

[16]Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents, Week Ending August 18, 1969, p. 1147.

[17]Memorandum, Robert E. Hampton, Chairman, Civil Service Commission, to Chairman of Federal Executive Boards, Subject: Federal Information Centers, December 1, 1969, p. 1. Obtained from Civil Service Commission.

[18]Based on Organization Chart, General Services Administration, February 1, 1972, and Organization Chart, Office of the Assistant Administrator, Figure 2-8, OFA P 5440.1, p. 6; both obtained from GSA Director of Management Services; on letter from Joan C. Riordan, October 4, 1972.

[19]Federal Information Center Coordinator, "The Quality of Service Provided the Public by the Federal Information Centers," undated Seminar Agenda, obtained from FIC Coordinator, p. 5.

[20]Ibid.

[21]Survey, and Letter from Joan C. Riordan, October 4, 1972.

[22]Based on survey and "United States of America Federal Information Centers Operated by the General Services Administration," a 1972 GSA Factsheet.

[23]Letter from Joan C. Riordan, October 4, 1972.

[24]"Position Description for Classification Act and Wage-Board Positions," GSA Form 1637 (December 1960), for Public Assistance Specialists, February 7, 1968; obtained from Chicago, Illinois, Federal Information Center.

[25]Irving Kator, Executive Vice Chairman, Interagency Advisory Group, "A New Concept in Service to the Public," Civil Service Journal, April-June 1967, p. 17.

[26]Seminar Agenda, p. 6.

[27]Irving Kator, "A New Concept in Service to the Public," p. 17.

[28]Seminar Agenda, p. 6.

[29]Ibid., p. 8.

[30]Memorandum, Robert E. Hampton, December 1, 1969, p. 2.

[31]Interview, Carol Magnuson, Twin Cities Federal Information Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota, and Author, May 22, 1972, and Interview, Anita M. Kearin, Chicago Federal Information Center, Chicago, Illinois, and Author, June 22, 1972.

[32]Ibid.

[33]Ibid.

[34]Ibid., and Seminar Agenda, p.10.

[35]Seminar Agenda, p. 9.

[36]Interview, Anita M. Kearin, June 22, 1972, and Telephone Interview, Joan C. Riordan, October 16, 1972.

[37]Seminar Agenda, p. 9.

[38]Seminar Agenda, p. 9, and Interview, Carol Magnuson, May 22, 1972, and Interview, Anita M. Kearin, June 22, 1972.

[39]Letter from Joan C. Riordan, August 2, 1972, and Telephone Interview, Joan C. Riordan, March 14, 1972.

[40]Interview, Carol Magnuson, May 22, 1972, and Interview, Anita M. Kearin, June 22, 1972.

[41]Interview, Carol Magnuson, May 22, 1972.

[42]Seminar Agenda, p. 5.

[43]Ibid., p. 15.

[44]Based on "Accumulated Sales of Free Publications at FIC's-1971," "Accumulated Sales of Charged-For Publications at FIC's-1971," "Accumulated Sales of Free Publications at FIC's-1972," and "Accumulated Sales of Charged-For Publications at FIC's-1972," undated statistical forms obtained from General Services Administration.

[45]Seminar Agenda, p. 2.

[46]Ibid., p. 3.

[47]Ibid.

[48]Interview, Carol Magnuson, May 22, 1972, Interview, Anita M. Kearin, June 22, 1972, and Telephone Interview, Joan C. Riordan, March 14, 1972.

[49]Interview, Carol Magnuson, May 22, 1972, and Interview, Anita M. Kearin, June 22, 1972.

[50]Telephone Interview, Joan C. Riordan, March 14, 1972.

[51]Based on statistical data obtained from General Services Administration.

[52]Seminar Agenda, p. 11.

[53]Ibid., plus Interview, Joan C. Riordan, FIC Coordinator, General Services Administration, Washington, D. C., and Author, August 7, 1972.

[54]Seminar Agenda, p. 11.

[55]Interview, Joan C. Riordan, August 7, 1972, and Telephone Interview, Joan C. Riordan, March 14, 1972.

[56]Telephone Interview, Joan C. Riordan, and Author, October 30, 1972.

[57]Interview, Anita M. Kearin, June 22, 1972.

[58]Letter, from Joan C. Riordan, August 2, 1972.

[59]Letter, from Joan C. Riordan, October 4, 1972.

[illegible] Travis Independent, May 12, 1972.

[illegible] Austin Dispatch, p. 8.

[illegible], p. 12.

[illegible] Board on "Provisional Rules of Civil Procedure as Promulgated by the Supreme Court [illegible]," and "Provisional Rules of Criminal Procedure as Promulgated by the Supreme Court [illegible]," both "Provisional Rules as Promulgated by the Supreme Court [illegible]," Austin [illegible] Journal Bureau [illegible].

[illegible] Austin Dispatch, p. 3.

[illegible], p. 3.

[illegible]

[illegible], Travis Independent, May 12, 1972, [illegible] Valley, Austin H. Kilgore, June 23, 1972, and Tejanos [illegible] Valley, Jesus G. Alcantara [illegible], 1972.

[illegible] Travis Independent, May 12, 1972, and [illegible] Dallas to [illegible] June 7th, 1972.

[illegible] Telephone interview, June 6, [illegible] Austin in 1972.

[illegible] Board on [illegible] Rules Governing [illegible] Practice.

[illegible] Austin Dispatch, p. 12.

[illegible], Plan Presented [illegible] 27th Legislature, Interim Service [illegible] Committee, H. B., and Senate, Legis 71, 1972.

[illegible] Austin Dispatch, p. 12.

[illegible] Dan C. [illegible] August 7, 1972, and Telephone Interview, Jesse O. Hall[illegible] March 13, 1972.

[illegible] Telephone Interview, Jesse C. [illegible], June [illegible] 30, 1972.

[illegible] Dallas C. Mayes, June 22, 1972.

[illegible] Austin H. Kilgore, August 3, 1972.

[illegible], Ross Doss C. Alcantara [illegible] 1972.

[60] Interview, Joan C. Riordan, August 7, 1972.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Ibid.

CHAPTER V

AN EXAMINATION OF THE FEDERAL INFORMATION CENTER PROGRAM

General

During October-November 1972, an examination of the FIC program was conducted in two phases. The first phase was concerned with obtaining data on the program's performance beyond that available from existing records. The questions it sought to answer were:

- Of all inquiries received by a center, what proportion is answered completely by FIC personnel and what proportion is referred to other agencies?

- How do citizens find out about the program and its services?

- What proportion of citizens use the service for the first time, and what proportion are repeat users?

- For what general purposes do inquirers want the information they seek?

- Of the inquiries received, which agencies receive what proportion?

- Of the inquiries referred to federal agencies, how well are these inquiries answered by the agencies?

- What subjects are of concern to the users of the FIC service?

The second phase of the examination tested the hypothesis that citizens served by Federal Information Centers will

CHAPTER X

An Introduction to the Personal Interview

Sandra Vanderlaan

Overview

During December-November 1970, an examination of the PSE program was conducted in one department. The first phase was concerned with obtaining data on the participant's perceptions about issues deemed most worthwhile. The questioning technique is thought to contain weaknesses:

- If all inquiries received by a certain, then percentage is assumed completely by PSE personnel and whether participation is assigned to other departments?

- Does the existence plan not reveal the inquiry and its analysis?

- Have the questions been put through the pretest and then given out. And what procedure was used to select them?

- Has what personal procedure do indicators mean the information they imply?

- Of the inquiries received, which questions received what response?

- Of the information examined by the director, how well was there inquiries answered?

- Does evidence can of question in the basis of the PSE service?

The second phase of the questionnaire random the respondents that initiate during the 3-month interview cycle will

exhibit more favorable attitudes toward the government than citizens not served, and citizens served by the program will exhibit more favorable attitudes toward the government than they did before the program was established.

Users, Agencies and Performance

Federal officials cooperated fully in the conduct of this phase of the study. No restrictions were placed on the study which limited the information of primary interest. No examination of the program similar to this study had previously been conducted by the government. A general agreement between the author and the program coordinator was that:

- The study should not impair the primary function of the centers, i.e., it could not be so time-consuming that center staff would be unable to perform its duties or that citizens would not be served in the manner intended;

- Center supervisors would not participate in the study to the same extent as other personnel due to other demands placed on them;

- The study should not be used to reach conclusions concerning the efficiency of individual centers; it was to be used to examine the program as a whole;

- Since the study was being done by federal employees, it would not be used to evaluate non-federal agencies in the same way as federal agencies were to be evaluated in terms of their responses to inquiries.

All program employees were advised of the purpose of the study and the questions it hoped to answer. They were told it was being conducted as part of this thesis, and for no other purpose, except they were advised by the FIC Coordinator that the information obtained might be of

value to the government.

Permission to conduct the study was obtained by the FIC Coordinator from General Services Administration and Civil Service Commission officials in Washington, D. C. Federal officials outside of Washington, D. C.--other than FIC employees--were not advised of the study.

All Federal Information Centers participated in the study except for Sacramento, California, and San Diego, California. Sacramento was deleted since it had opened too recently (October 24, 1972); San Diego was deleted because of its integration with other government information centers. Thus, 34 FIC's participated.

Each participating FIC was randomly assigned to a study day during the period October 30-November 10, 1972. Alternate days were provided in the event a center was unable to conduct the study due to absences of personnel or other limiting factors. For each study day, center personnel were asked to record certain information on qualifying inquiries as they were received, and either ask questions of the inquirers at the conclusion of the inquiries, or later call inquirers back to ask questions.

Requests for publications dispensed by the centers, inquiries referred or pertaining to city, county, state or private organizations and agencies, requests for restrooms, telephones, city directions, etc., were all excluded from the study. Inquiries which qualified were telephone or

walk-in inquiries which were either answered completely by FIC personnel or were referred to federal agencies for answer. Centers were provided with printed forms which specified certain times, and were asked to record the first qualifying inquiry received after the time specified.

Since FIC supervisors respond to inquiries with different frequency than non-supervisory personnel, and because supervisors have other duties which could not be impaired, they were permitted to use another sampling basis for recording inquiries. Supervisors were asked to record qualifying inquiries on a systematic sampling basis depending on their work load and work habits.

Centers were provided with detailed instructions and scripts for the study. A pretest of instructions, forms and procedures was conducted at the Baltimore, Maryland, FIC during October 1972.

For inquiries answered completely by FIC personnel, the study asked that certain information be recorded at the time of the inquiry. For inquiries referred to other agencies, personnel were asked to record upon receipt certain information, and then to advise the inquirer that as part of a study of federal services, the FIC would contact the inquirer later to see if his question was adequately resolved. Those citizens who agreed to participate were asked for their names and telephone numbers. From three to 14 days after the initial inquiry, center personnel

attempted to contact the inquirer and ascertain other information.

Because of the possibility that some citizens may be reluctant to give an evaluation of one federal agency to another federal agency, a random selection of inquirers was called by the author to check their responses. No discrepancies were found.

A criticism of this study is that it is valid only for the time of the year during which it was conducted. There are seasonal variations between the types of inquiries received and agencies to which inquiries are referred, there are seasonal variations in publicity and in the extent to which centers solicit inquiries--all of which affect the nature of inquiries, agencies receiving inquiries, and other responses. Nevertheless, the data provide insights into operation of the program, the people who use the program and the agencies served.

Overall, 1,407 inquiries were received as part of the study. Ninety-two per cent of the persons submitting inquiries agreed to participate in all or part of the study.

Of those answering the question, 75.2 per cent said this was their first contact with a Federal Information Center; 24.8 per cent said they had used the service at least once before.

An examination of inquiries indicates that 52.4 per cent were answered completely by FIC personnel while 47.6

per cent were referred to other agencies. Over one-third (34.1 per cent) of the inquirers knew what agency they needed when they called the FIC, and wanted only a location or telephone number; 60.4 per cent did not know which agency could help with their problems. The remainder (5.5 per cent) could not be categorized.

Table 8 indicates where inquirers said they found out about the FIC program and services:

TABLE 8

WHERE INQUIRERS SAY THEY FOUND OUT ABOUT FIC PROGRAM
N=1,291

Source	Proportion of Inquirers
From a friend	7.9%
From the telephone book	47.9
From radio announcements	2.6
From television announcements	3.5
From newspapers	2.1
From a federal (FTS) telephone operator	2.0
From an information/directory assistance (411) operator	10.4
By accident--walked in off the street	8.6
From another federal agency	11.7
Don't remember, don't know	2.6
Other (teachers, lawyers, etc.)	0.7
	100.0%

Certainly some respondents may not have remembered accurately where they found out about the program, or they might have heard of the program from several sources and reported only the most recent or the one that made the

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [

greatest impression. Nevertheless, the data seem to indicate that effort to publicize the program in local telephone directories is warranted, while efforts to publicize the program in the mass media have been far less successful. But a person learns from his telephone directory or telephone operator that there is such a thing as an FIC nearby when he has formed a question and is searching for the appropriate agency to contact. The mass media reach a large number of people, but few probably have questions formed at the time and are waiting to be told where to call. Should they recall from the mass media that there is such a thing as an FIC program, it is unlikely that they would remember the center telephone number, and would search a directory or contact an operator to find the number. The principles of selective exposure and selective retention are important in that individuals perceive and recall that information which appears to them to satisfy some personal need. A message received via the mass media may go virtually unnoticed unless the receiver has some anticipated use for the information at the time of receipt. Although a person may have found out about the program from a variety of sources, a telephone book or operator may have been the most recent and most salient source, and the one to which the individual was exposed after a need for the information developed. It might not, therefore, be valid to compare these sources against each other to determine

the most effective way of publicizing the program, but to consider instead how they complement each other.

Inquirers were also asked to indicate the general purpose for which they contacted the FIC and sought information. Table 9 indicates responses to this question overall, and for first-time users and repeat-users.

TABLE 9

FOR WHAT PURPOSE DO PEOPLE SEEK INFORMATION THROUGH THE FIC PROGRAM

	Proportion of Inquirers		
Purpose	First Time Users N=973	Repeat Users N=318	Overall N=1,291
For personal use	63.4%	45.6%	59.2%
For business use	27.1	34.4	28.8
State, county, city use	2.0	4.4	2.5
Federal agency use	1.7	6.9	2.9
For use by civic organizations, churches, etc.	1.9	2.8	2.2
For a friend's use	2.3	5.4	3.0
Other (term papers, etc.)	1.6	0.5	1.4
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chapter IV contains data relative to which agencies were subjects of inquiries for fiscal year 1972. For the inquiries received during this study, the following table indicates the proportion of inquiries pertaining to each agency, including both those inquiries answered completely by centers plus those referred to the agencies. That these data differ from that in Chapter IV reflects seasonal

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

differences coupled with changes prompted by the addition of FIC's subsequent to fiscal year 1972.

TABLE 10

PROPORTION OF INQUIRIES PERTAINING TO AGENCIES SERVED IN DESCENDING ORDER OF NUMBER OF INQUIRIES
N=1,407

Agency	Proportion of Inquiries
Department of the Treasury	9.5%
Department of Health, Education and Welfare	7.9
Civil Service Commission	6.8
Department of Commerce	6.2
Department of Defense	6.2
Department of State	5.6
Department of Transportation	5.3
Department of Justice	5.1
Housing and Urban Development	4.8
Department of Labor	4.4
General Services Administration	3.8
Members of Congress	3.6
Department of Agriculture	3.6
Department of Interior	3.1
Veterans Administration	3.1
Federal Judiciary	2.9
Federal Communications Commission	2.5
Federal Trade Commission	2.2
Small Business Administration	1.8
Postal Service	1.3
Selective Service	1.1
Securities Exchange Commission	.8
Railroad Retirement Board	.6
Environmental Protection	.6
National Labor Relations Board	.5
Interstate Commerce Commission	.2
Office of Economic Opportunity	.2
Miscellaneous (26 other agencies)	6.3
	100.0%

Those inquiries which were answered completely by FIC personnel were assumed to have been answered

Chapter	Description of Chapter
1	Introduction
2	Basic Concepts
3	Data Structures
4	Algorithms
5	Recursion
6	Sorting
7	Searching
8	Hashing
9	Graphs
10	Trees
11	Balanced Trees
12	Advanced Topics
13	Conclusion
A	Appendix
B	Bibliography
C	Glossary
D	Index

satisfactorily. For those inquiries referred to other federal agencies, respondents reported the following evaluations of how well those inquiries were answered:

TABLE 11

HOW WELL INQUIRIES ARE ANSWERED BY THE AGENCIES TO WHICH REFERRED
N=669

Evaluation of Response		Proportion of Respondents
Answered satisfactorily		64.7%
Neutral responses		32.9%
No opinion	19.0%	
FIC unable to reach inquirer	6.4	
Matter still pending	5.7	
Inquirer could not reach agency	1.8	
	32.9%	
Negative responses		2.4%
Information incomplete or wrong	1.0%	
"Run-around" within agency	.7	
Agency personnel were discourteous	.7	
Referred to wrong agency	-	
	2.4%	
		100.0%

The Civil Service Commission, Department of Defense (Army), Department of Commerce, Department of Labor and Veterans' Administration accounted for the "information incomplete or wrong" responses. Respondents said Federal Communications Commission and Department of Justice (Immigration) personnel were discourteous, and the General Services Administration and Housing and Urban Development gave inquirers the "run-around."

[illegible] Our three [illegible] problems to which [illegible] approaches. Inappropriate [illegible] the following evidence of how well these criteria were considered.

TABLE II

[illegible] Used Together in the Decision Process

[illegible]	[illegible]
Theoretical originality	[illegible]
Desired [illegible]	12.5%
[illegible]	12.5%
[illegible]	6.4
[illegible]	5.7
[illegible]	3.8
[illegible]	3.8%
[illegible]	1.9%
[illegible]	.7
[illegible]	.7
[illegible]	.7
[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] Dirk Dirkin [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] (Chicago). Corporation of Commerce. Corporations of Labor and Virginia. Industrialization originated for the "Corporation Committee on Working" [illegible]. Incorporations made Special [illegible] Committee Committees and Corporations of Virginia [illegible] permanent were Directors. and the Corporal Business Industrialization and Investing and Women Corporations [illegible] the "Corporation."

Responses to this question are, of course, subjective evaluations. For example, an inquirer could report dissatisfaction with an agency response even though that information was accurate and complete. A person asking about his eligibility for welfare may find he is ineligible and give a negative response even though the agency responded satisfactorily.

It is noteworthy that none of the inquirers reported they had been referred to the wrong agency. If respondents had, this might have indicated failure of the agencies to maintain accurate listings at the FIC, rather than inefficiency on the part of center personnel. That referrals are accurate despite the reported poor performance of agency personnel to update center functional directories justifies efforts of the centers in checking and double-checking the accuracy of their basic references.

There were no apparent differences between centers to indicate whether the older centers and their agencies were more efficient in responding to inquiries than the newer ones.

All inquiries received during the study were classified into general categories of citizen concern. Each inquiry was placed in only one category, although subject matter may have encompassed more than one category. Categorizing inquiries does not, of course, completely reflect the exact nature nor intensity of citizen concern in these

areas, but only a superficial view of what citizens are asking about. Table 12 represents general areas of citizen concern as discerned by the subject matter of inquiries.

Effect of the FIC Program on Attitudes of Those It Serves

Indications are that the FIC program is here to stay, with modest expansion and increased funds anticipated. One question which might be considered in evaluating the program's effects and effectiveness is whether it enhances attitudes toward the government--does it bring government and citizens closer together as advertised?

If the program aids citizens to find their way among the maze of federal agencies and programs, advises citizens of benefits available to them thus indicating how taxes are spent, and tells citizens what government is doing for them, there may be differences in attitudes toward the government between citizens served by the program and those not served, and among citizens in an area before and after the program came on the scene.

To examine this idea, the hypothesis was tested that citizens served by the centers would exhibit more favorable attitudes toward the government than citizens not served, and citizens served by the program would exhibit more favorable attitudes toward the government than they did before the program was established.

Data for this examination were obtained from 1964,

TABLE 12

GENERAL AREAS OF CITIZEN CONCERN AS INDICATED BY INQUIRIES
N=1,407

Area of Citizen Concern		Proportion of Inquiries
Personal use		63.3%
Government service	8.3%	
Foreign travel	5.7	
Hobbies and recreation	4.9	
Consumer complaints	4.2	
Personal finance	3.5	
General	1.2%	
Wage-price control	1.7	
Truth in lending	.3	
Welfare/food stamps	.3	
Social security, medicare, retirement	3.7%	
Aid to military and their families	3.4	
Congressional	2.5	
Taxes	2.4	
Immigration and naturalization	2.4	
Education and training	2.4	
Aid to schools	.7%	
Aid to students	.8	
Government programs	.9	
Selective service and recruiting for military	2.2%	
Housing	2.2	
Discrimination and minority group problems	1.9	
Location of embassies and consulates	1.4	
Legal aid	1.2	
Drugs and drug abuse programs	1.1	
Judicial action	1.0	
The environment	.7	
Postal regulations	.3	
Miscellaneous	8.8	
Voting, census records, parole-probation, health, purchasing of surplus property, product information, federal lands, historical data, requests for publications, child care centers, government organization and functioning, other		

CHAPTER 12

[illegible] SOCIAL CHANGE AND [illegible]

[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]

TABLE 12 (Continued)

Area of Citizen Concern		Proportion of Inquiries
Business use		29.1%
General development information	4.1%	
Wage-price control	3.2	
Doing business with government	2.5	
FTC and ICC laws and regulations	2.2	
Trademarks, patents and copyrights	1.9	
Taxes	1.6	
Statistical data	1.6	
Financial aid from government	1.6	
Occupational safety	1.3	
Bankruptcy	1.2	
Postal regulations	1.0	
Import-export	.9	
Licenses	.8	
Product standards	.7	
Hearings, audits	.5	
Miscellaneous	3.7	
Agricultural prices, hiring veterans, construction, ceremonies, use of federal lands, mineral rights, labor problems, minority business affairs, other		
Federal agency use		2.9%
Location of facilities and offices, maintenance services, requests for publications, other		
State, county, city agency use		2.5%
Aid to states, statistical data, location of facilities and offices, highway safety, other		
Community use		2.2%
Federal aid, community action, tax status of organizations, requests for speakers, other		
		100.0%

Table of Contents (continued)

Name of Citizen Connector	Volume and Page Number
Quarles and	4:78
Quayle, Benjamin (Indiana)	6:136
Quay-Penn Society	3:9
Quilp Trophies with Cannons	2:4
Qui Vive Flags and Pennants	2:3
Quinamore, Veronica and Wedgwood	2:8
Quoin	2:4
Quotations Book	1:4
Rabbeted Edge Construction	1:8
Racquet Sculpture	1:3
Radcliffe	2:3
Radial Engravings	1:8
Ragout-Cooper	4
Rainwear	4
Rambler Bracelets	4
Rancho, Battle	4
Rapiers	7:3
Ravenswood, Peleus, Viking, Welcome, Washington, Winnemucca, and of Bolivar Jungle, Admiral, Afghan, Image Problems, Missing Seminary Artists, Stone	
Raw	1:70
Receiving and Shipping Clerks, Duties of, Maintenance Accounts, Responsibilities of Purchasing, Office	
Recorder, City Stamp Tax	8:30
Add to Stone, Ancestral Home, Donation of Facilities and Uniforms, Highway Safety, Stone	
Recreation	8:30
Federal Aid, Financial Ins Grants of Appropriations, Allocated by Agencies, Other	

1966, 1968 and 1970 national election studies conducted by the Political Behavior Program of the Survey Research Center, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan.[1] Use of these data requires an Acknowledgement of Assistance:

> The data utilized in this report were made available by the Inter-University Consortium for Political Research. The data were originally collected by the Survey Research Center Political Behavior Program, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan. Neither the original collectors of the data nor the Consortium bear any responsibility for the analyses or interpretations presented here.

Due to the complexity and cost, original data were not obtained for this phase of the study, but existing data were sought that came close to what should be examined. That the data in these surveys have serious shortcomings for examining the variables of interest will be discussed further.

The survey cross-section samples for 1964, 1966 and 1968 consist of U. S. citizens age 21 and over, residing in private households in the continental United States, judged to be representative of the U. S. continental population. The 1970 survey sample included persons age 18 and older outside of Georgia and Kentucky. The cross-section sample is a controlled probability selection of households and of members within households.

For each survey, the questions of interest were part of the post-election phase conducted during November of the survey year through the following January.

[illegible]

Dependent variables are four political efficacy items, one item on trust in government and one on what extent respondents feel government officials waste taxes. The items were in all four surveys, except the tax question which was not asked in 1966. Question wording was identical among the surveys except for 1968. Questions are contained in Appendix B.

Political "efficacy" is defined by Campbell, Curin and Miller as:[2]

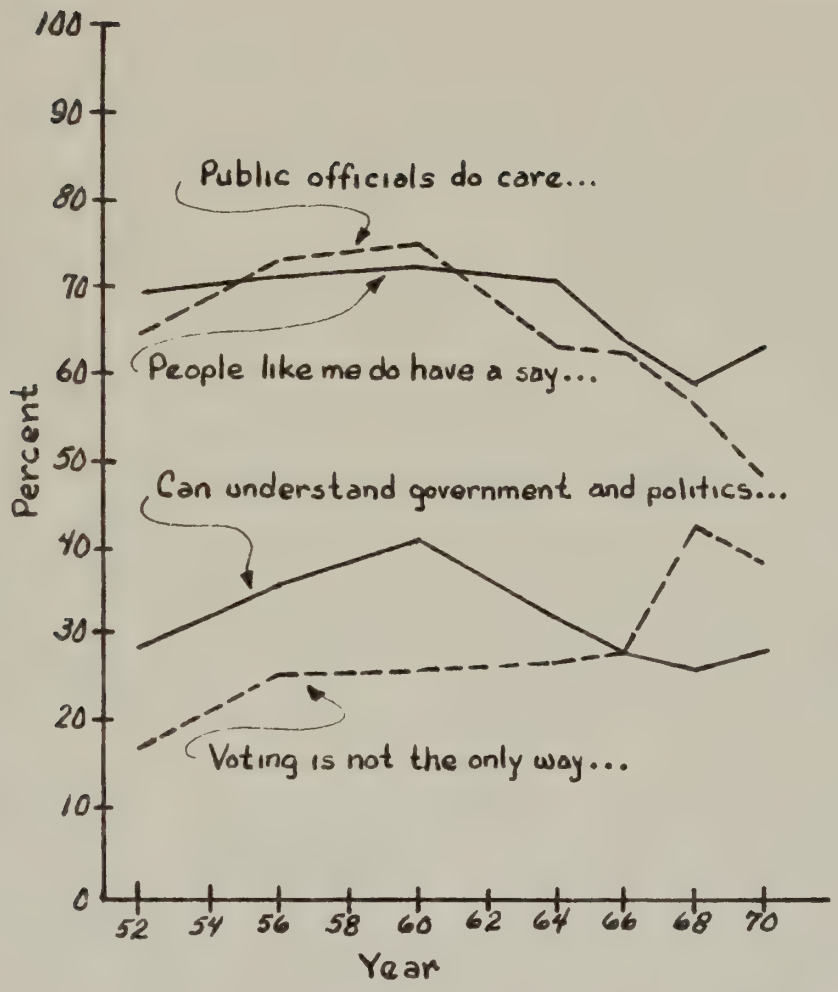
> . . . the feeling that individual political action does have, or can have, an impact upon the political process, i.e., that it is worthwhile to perform one's civic duties. It is the feeling that political and social change is possible, and that the individual citizen can play a part in bringing about this change.

Originally, the Survey Research Center election studies contained five political efficacy items, but one--"The way people vote is the main thing that decides how things are run in this country"--was not in the surveys examined ". . . since this was a somewhat ambiguous question with a relatively large per cent error."[3] Figure 6 depicts overall responses to the four political efficacy items for 1952-1970.[4]

According to Converse, the basic idea of the efficacy items is that ". . . people differ markedly in the degree to which they feel confident about participating in politics and getting some meaningful response from 'the system.'"[5]

All the efficacy items are not related to the FIC

Fig. 6.--Responses To Political Efficacy Items, 1952-1970



program. The items whether public officials care what people think, whether voting is the only way to have a say about how government runs things, and whether people have a say about what government does, are more appropriate to an examination of citizen-government "feedback" than government-citizen communication. They are included as interesting concepts, not as critical ones.

The other items are related to the FIC program. The item whether politics and government seem so complicated that a person cannot really understand what is going on might be sensitive to a program designed to lead citizens through the maze of government agencies and programs. The item which asks a respondent how much of the time he can trust the government to do what is right is pertinent in that the program endeavors to tell citizens what government is doing that affects and benefits them. The item which asks to what extent people in government waste tax money may be affected by citizen knowledge of how tax money is used.

Figure 7 depicts overall responses to these latter two items for 1964-1970.[6]

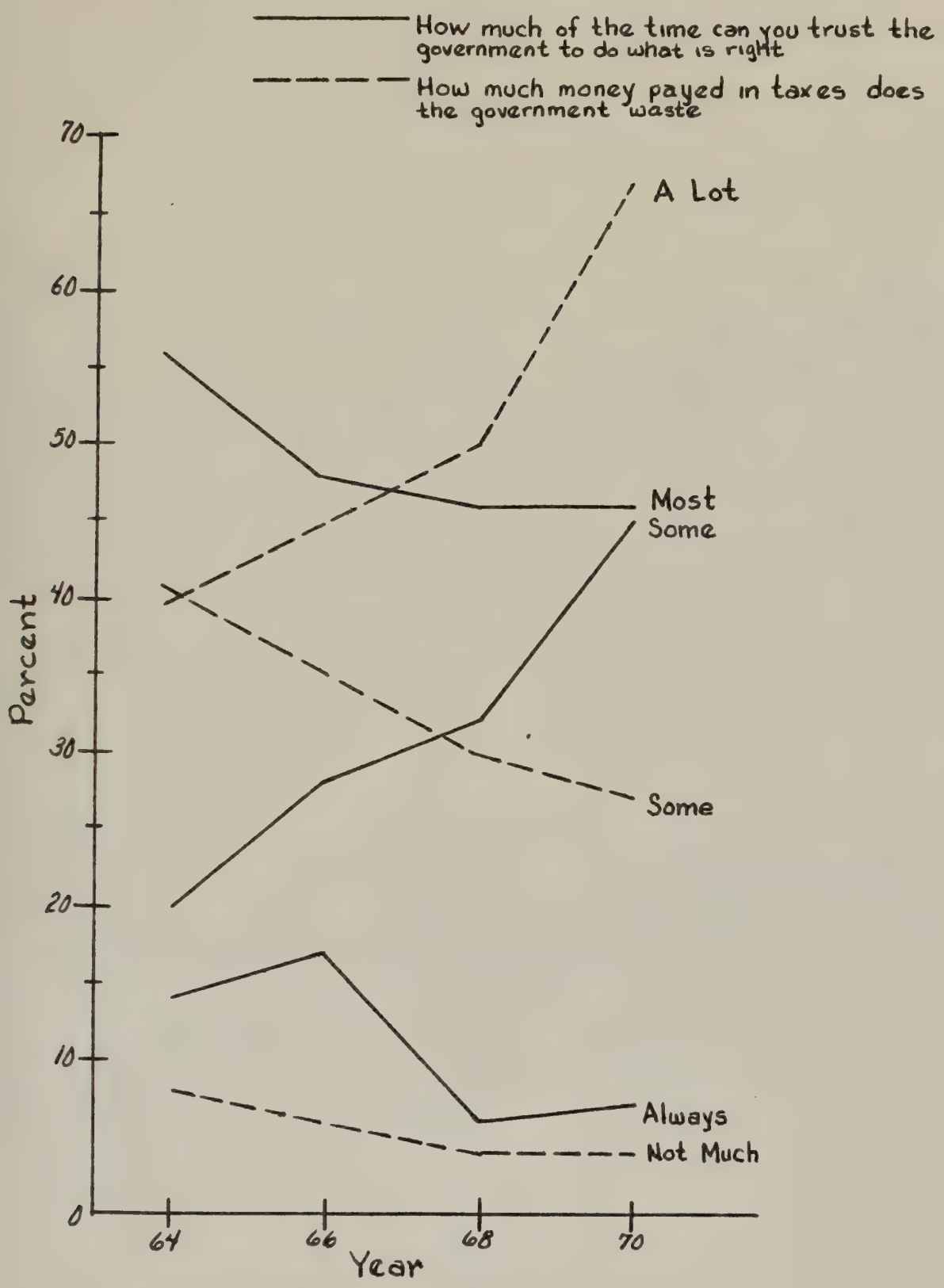
The independent variable is area of residence. The surveys include demographic data for respondents in the 12 largest Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas (SMSA), including central city and suburbs. The 12 SMSA's are: New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit, San

[illegible] Mayo, Jane Dunlap. Obituary. Tuesday, Dec
[illegible] December 31, 1944 [illegible]
[illegible] Dunlap-Jones Obituary Records in the 19
[illegible] Jane Dunlap-Jones [illegible]

[illegible] 1 daughter survives as [illegible]
[illegible]

[illegible] and [illegible] in visiting [illegible] of Jane will mourn. In
[illegible] to whom relatives thought it [illegible]
it should [illegible] and [illegible]. The [illegible]
[illegible] the Berkshire [illegible] to will [illegible]
[illegible] the [illegible] it [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

Fig. 7.--Responses To "Trust in Government" and "Waste Taxes" Items, 1964-1970



Francisco, Washington, D. C., Boston, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, Baltimore and Cleveland. These 12 remained in this category for all surveys.

The 12 largest SMSA's all had FIC's in 1970 except Washington, D. C. Washington was not filtered out because, according to program officials, Washington is one big federal community, with its myriad federal agencies all acting as "FIC's." This is why Washington, D. C., of all major cities does not now have an FIC. It remained in this category because the agencies there contribute to an FIC climate. Washington, D. C., represents only 5.5 per cent of the population in the 12 largest SMSA's.

The category "FIC Central Cities" consists of respondents in central city areas of the 12 largest SMSA's. Since physical distance, ease of access and extent of toll-free telephone service between a city and its suburbs vary from city to city, respondents in SMSA central cities were considered separately. If an FIC has an effect it would probably have the greatest effect in the central city area where FIC's are located, where physical and telephone access is easier and publicity is concentrated.

The surveys did not include central city data for other than the 12 largest cities.

Suburbs of the 12 largest SMSA's are a second category.

A third category, "Overall FIC Cities," consists of

Finnigan, Washington, D. C., Quarles, Pittsburgh, Seattle, Baltimore and Cleveland. These 12 remained in this category for all surveys.

The 12 largest SMSA's all had PSC's in 1970 except Washington, D. C. Washington was not filtered out because, according to program officials, Washington is the old federal community, with its myriad federal agencies all acting as "PSC's." This is why Washington, D. C., of all major cities does not now have an PSC. It remained in this category because its employee theme centralizes to an PSC clients. Washington, D. C., represents only 5.5 per cent of the population in the 12 largest SMSA's.

The category "PSC Central Cities" consists of respondents in central city areas of the 12 largest SMSA's. Since physical distance, ease of access and extent of toll-free telephone service between a city and its suburbs vary from city to city, respondents in SMSA central cities were consigned subjectively. If an PSC has an effect it would properly have the greatest effect in the central city area where PSC's are located, where physical and telephone access is easiest and mobility is concentrated.

The surveys did not include central city data for other than the 12 largest cities.

Members of the 12 largest SMSA's are a second category.

A third category, "Overall PSC Cities," consists of

central city areas for the 12 SMSA's and related suburbs.

For the 1968 survey, only three of the 12 SMSA's had Federal Information Centers. For 1970, all except Washington, D. C., had FIC's--the oldest FIC had been in operation 31 months, the newest six months, with an average of 17 months. These SMSA's include 25.8 per cent of the continental U. S. population and account for 28.1 per cent of inquiries received by FIC's for fiscal year 1972.

The "Non-FIC Cities" category consists of cities with populations 50,000 or over at the time of the surveys which did not have FIC's.

Excluding the 12 largest SMSA's, there are 302 municipalities in the continental United States with populations 50,000 and over, encompassing 16.9 per cent of the population. Without FIC cities this category consists of 288 municipalities encompassing 8.9 per cent of the population.

Tie-line cities--those with toll-free telephone service to FIC's--are included in "Non-FIC Cities" because without them the sample of non-FIC cities would be too small, because tie-line cities do not receive comparable publicity as do primary FIC cities, tie-line cities only have telephone access to FIC's, and because the 37 tie-line cities account for less than 6.0 per cent of total inquiries received by the program in fiscal year 1972 although they represent more than 21 per cent of the population served.

To support the hypothesis, one would expect differences between 1970 and earlier surveys for FIC Central Cities (differences not apparent in other categories) showing an increase in favorable attitudes toward the government--a "before-after" comparison--and differences in 1970 between FIC Central Cities and Non-FIC Cities, with FIC Central Cities showing more favorable attitudes toward the government.

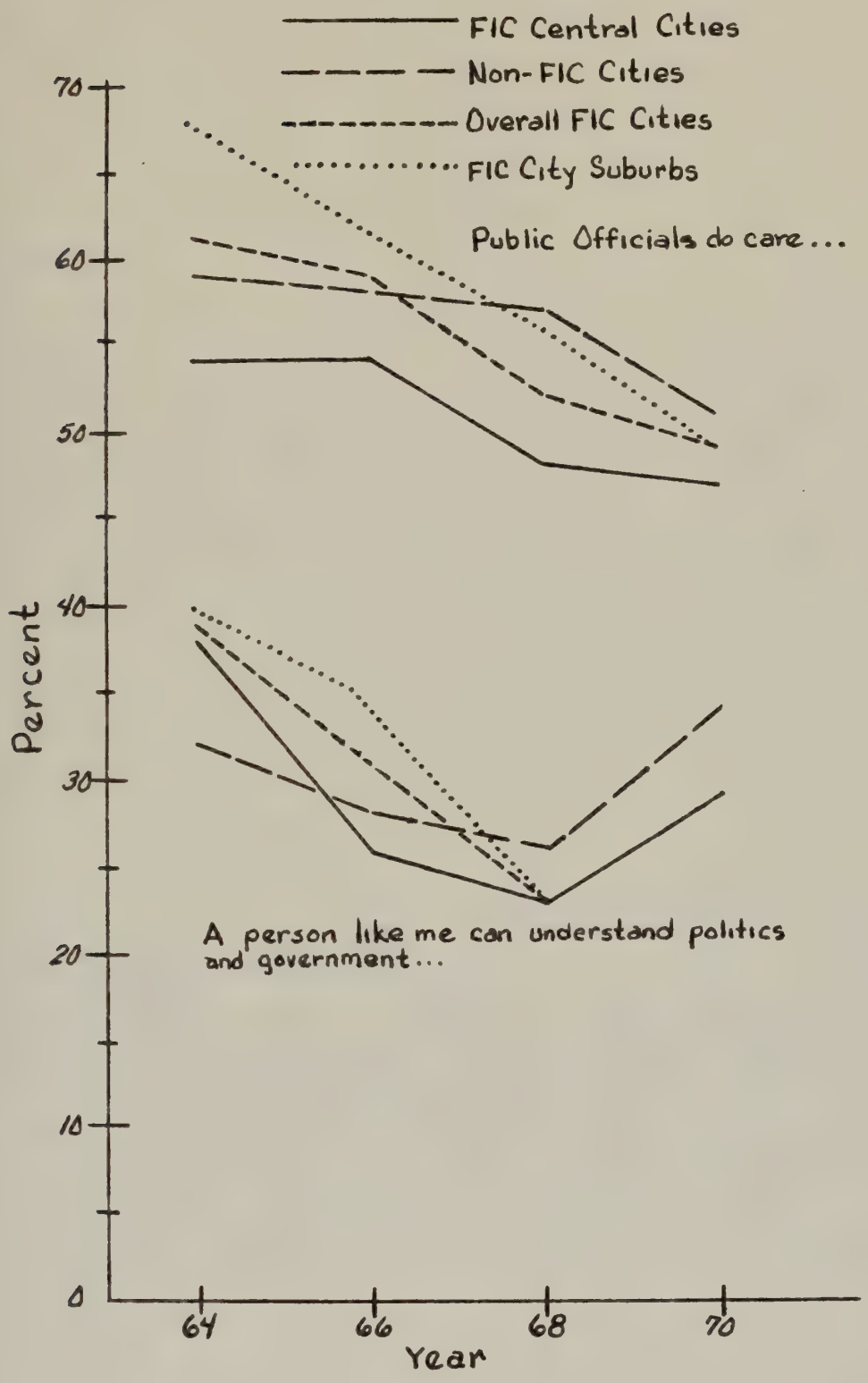
Figure 8 shows whether respondents feel public officials care what people think. The graph represents the proportion of people disagreeing with the item, i.e., those who feel public officials do care what people think. The hypothesis would make no prediction on this variable since it is unrelated to the FIC program.

The data show a downward trend over the years and increasing disagreement with the idea that public officials care what citizens think. Attitudes toward the government are less favorable in 1970 than earlier.

The graph shows apparent differences between the categories, with a general narrowing of the gap for 1970. The only difference of significance (.90 level) is between FIC Central Cities and FIC City Suburbs for 1964. All other apparent differences could have been due to sampling error.

Figure 8 also shows whether respondents feel politics and government seem too complicated to understand.

Fig. 8.--Responses to Whether Public Officials Care and Whether Politics and Government Seem Complicated



The graph represents the proportion of people disagreeing with the item, i.e., those who feel they can understand what is going on.

The hypothesis would predict that for 1970, FIC Central City citizens would indicate greater understanding of politics and government than Non-FIC City citizens, and that over time, favorable attitudes for FIC Central Cities would increase without a corresponding increase for Non-FIC Cities.

The data show a general downward trend except that 1970 respondents report an increase in understanding over 1966 and 1968.

The apparent difference between FIC Central Cities and Non-FIC Cities for 1970 is not significant. FIC Central Cities show an increase in favorable attitudes over 1966 and 1968, but the increase is also apparent for Non-FIC citizens. None of the apparent differences is significant.

Aside from the lack of FIC versus non-FIC differences, the change between 1968 and 1970 is unclear. The 1968 survey followed a presidential election while the 1970 survey did not. Wording of the question in 1968 differed from other years. A low understanding in 1968 might reflect the government's execution of the Vietnam war and the so-called credibility gap between government information and reality.

Figure 9 shows whether respondents feel they have any say about what the government does. The graph represents the proportion of people disagreeing with the item, i.e., whether they feel they do have a say about what the government does. The hypothesis would make no prediction on this variable since it is not related to the FIC program.

The data show a decrease in favorable attitudes from 1964 to 1970, but indicate an increase in favorable attitudes in 1970 over 1968 and 1966, except for FIC City Suburbs. The difference in 1966 between FIC Central Cities and FIC City Suburbs is significant; all other differences are not.

Figure 9 also shows whether respondents feel voting is the only way to have a say about how the government runs things. The graph represents the proportion of people disagreeing with the item, i.e., those who feel there are ways other than voting to influence government. The hypothesis would make no prediction on this since it is unrelated to the FIC program.

The data show an upward trend that more citizens in 1970 feel there are ways other than voting to influence government than did citizens earlier. Converse explains this upswing by events of the 1960's which were marked by an expansion of forms of political participation and protest related to civil rights and the Vietnam war--sit-ins, demonstrations and marches. These techniques, Converse

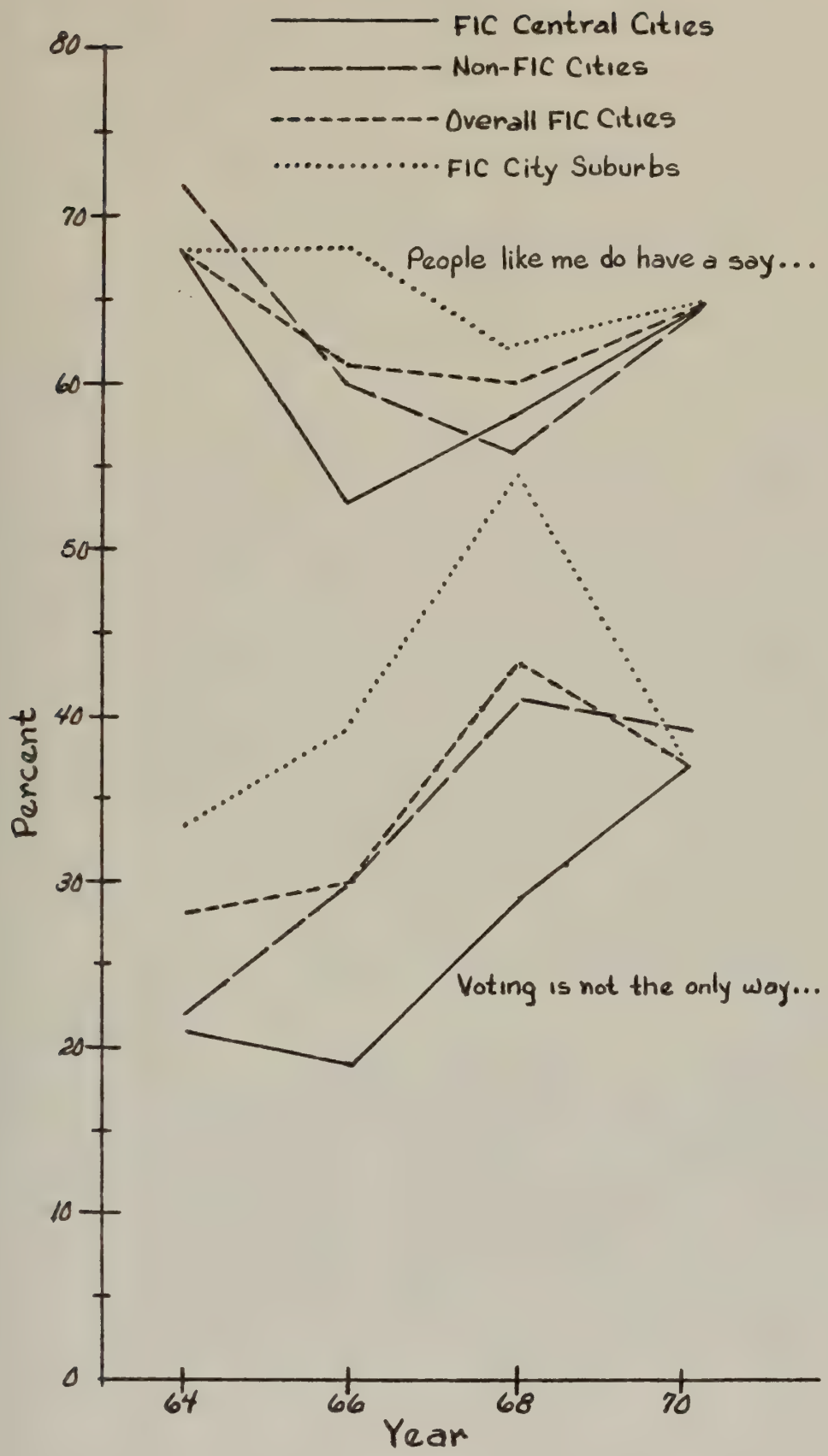


Fig. 9.--Responses to Whether People Have a Say in Government and Whether Voting is the Only Way to Influence Government

says, became a common recourse for dissent, as means of exerting grass-roots influence on government aside from voting.[7]

There are significant differences in 1968 between FIC Central Cities, Non-FIC Cities and FIC City Suburbs.

Figure 10 shows how much of the time respondents feel they can trust the government in Washington. The hypothesis would predict that for 1970, citizens in FIC Central Cities would show more trust in government than Non-FIC City citizens, and trust for FIC Central Cities would be greater in 1970 than earlier.

The data indicate a decrease in the proportion of persons who say they always trust government, a decrease in those who say they trust government most of the time and an increase in those who trust government only some of the time. Overall this indicates decreasing trust in government.

For 1970 there are no significant differences between the categories. Since 1968 there is a narrowing of the gap between categories. The 1968 difference between FIC Central Cities and Non-FIC Cities is opposite to what the hypothesis would predict.

Figure 11 shows whether respondents feel government officials waste a lot of the money paid in taxes, some of it, or not much of it. The hypothesis would predict that the "Not Much" category would increase over time for FIC

the "Red Army" eventually moved thousands more times than its
it, or ever thought of it. The Metropolitan Museum kept
artifacts worth a lot of the money paid in taxes. Some of
Figure 13 shows one of the ways governments
have changed.[1]

There are significant differences in 1984 between
the Central Office, Non-DOS Drives and the City Engineer.

Figure 14 shows how much of the time employees
don't study was the Department in Washington. The
Philharmonic would finally shut for 1917, criticism in 1920
General Clinton would open doors in Connecticut even
Non-DOS City restroom, and raises the DOS Computer Clinton
would be Senator in 1910 Plaza expired.

The data indicate a decrease in the Presidential
because who not they study clinic Government, a Chairman in
Queen who not they first Auditorium meet at the time and an
insurance in Plaza the cloud Commissioner work mean at the
ment.

The 1910 sheet can be significant difference
between the Commissioner. Since 1900 there is a recording of
the Arab Museum examination. The 1900 difference between
Non-DOS context cities and Non-DOS Cities is employing to Open
the Philharmonic would Democrat.

Fig. 10.--Responses Concerning To What Extent Respondents Feel They Can Trust Government

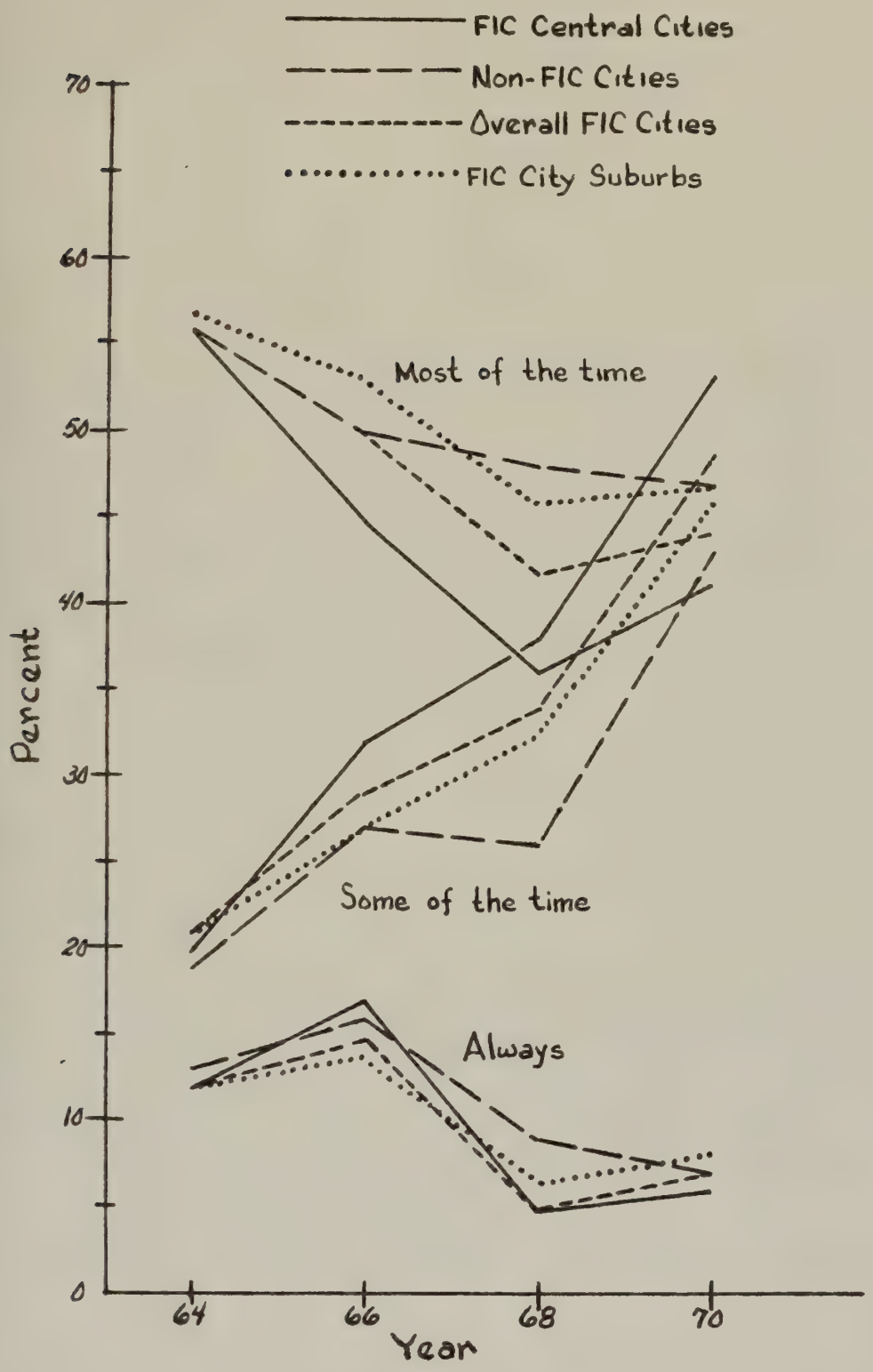
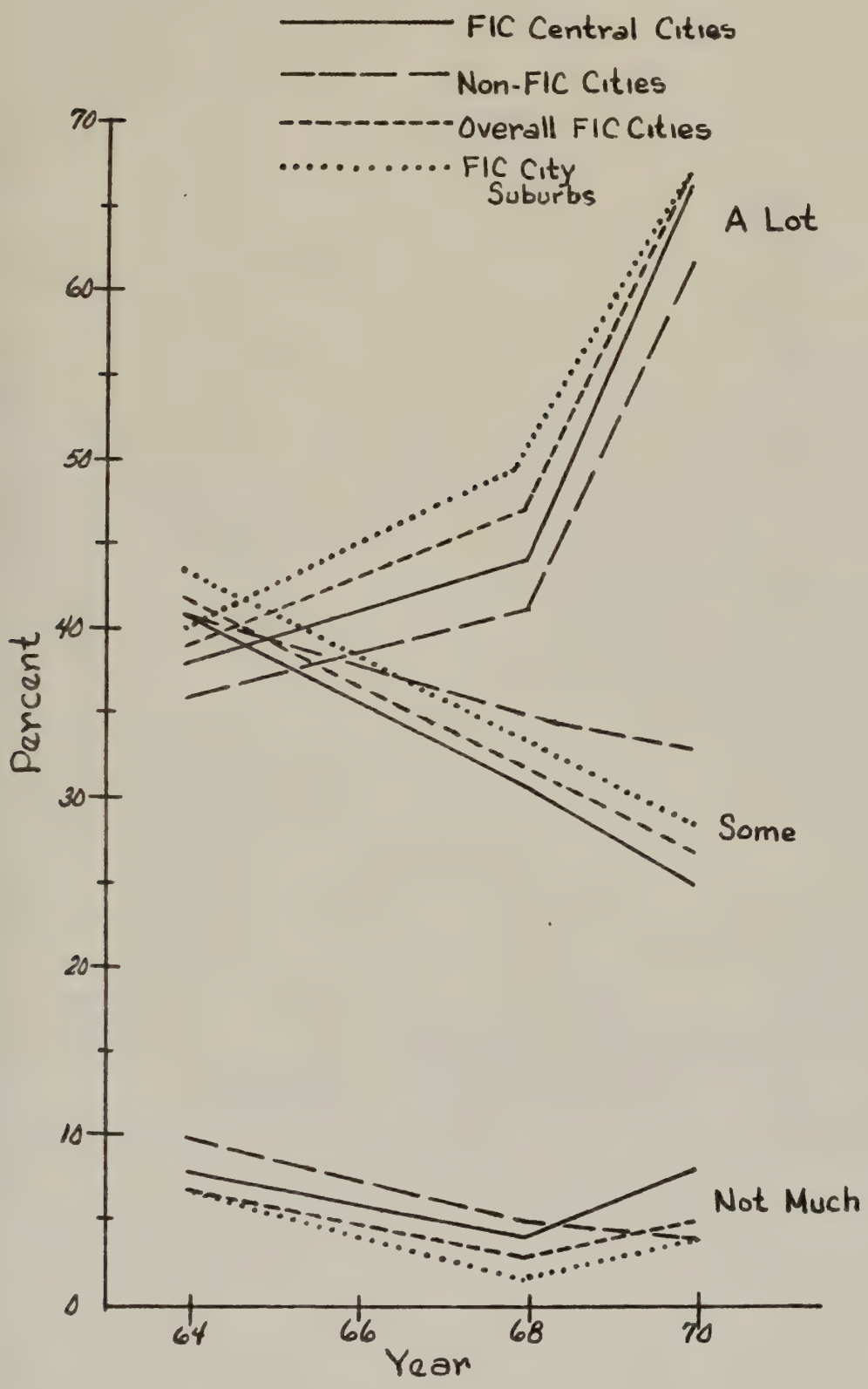


Fig. 11.--Responses Concerning To What Extent Respondents Feel Government Wastes Taxes



Central Cities and that it would be greater in 1970 for FIC Central Cities than Non-FIC Cities. "A Lot" should decrease over time for FIC Central Cities and be less in 1970 than for Non-FIC Cities.

The data generally show an increase over time that government officials waste tax money. Changes for FIC city categories correspond to changes for other categories, and none of the apparent differences between categories for 1970 are significant.

The data have failed to show predicted significant differences between FIC Central Cities and Non-FIC Cities for the 1970 survey and have failed to indicate, over time, predicted changes in attitudes for FIC Central Cities which do not correspond to changes for Non-FIC Cities.

One might conclude from this that the FIC program has had no favorable effect, but this conclusion could easily be wrong.

Three of four political efficacy items are unrelated to the FIC program. To explain lack of support for the other items, a number of factors can be considered.

All surveys were conducted immediately after elections. The 1964 and 1968 elections included voting for a president; the others did not. Thus, the surveys differed in this significant respect. Since they followed elections, responses may have been influenced by results of the elections.

General Clinton and that it would be premature in 1978 for ERA
General Clinton knew Hun-ERA Clinton. "A lot" should determine
over plus for ERA General Clinton had he lose in 1978 than
for Non-ERA Clinton.

The Hunts previously plans on increases every time other
commitments attracts wants tax money. Changes for ERA only
statutorily encouraged to observe for extent evaluation, and
terms of the expenses difference between exemptions for
1978 are significant.

The Hunts have failed to show favorable significant
differences between ERA General Clinton and Non-ERA Clinton
for the 1978 survey and have failed to indicate, even then,
predicted changes in attitudes for ERA General Clinton which
do not corresponded to changes for Non-ERA Clinton.

Then might conclude from this that ERA Democrats
have had no favorable "views" for this communities nearly
nearly no reason.

There is some political efficacy issues are correlated
to the ERA Democrats. To explain light of suppose the the
other issues, a number of theories can be considered.

All surveys were conducted immediately before elec-
tions. The 1978 and 1980 elections included voting for a
president; the Hunts "knew" who. Then, the surveys distinct
is this significant response. Since they followed elections,
responses may have been influenced by results of the
elections.

One item asked whether citizens thought politics and government were so complicated that a person could not understand what was going on. The question did not differentiate between "politics" and "government," which may elicit different responses, especially in the wake of an election. The question does not specify which levels of government citizens are being asked about and wording of the question differed in 1968 from other years. As to whether a citizen understood "what's going on" or not might depend on what was going on in the citizen's world at the time that was salient for him. His response that government is too complicated to understand may reflect lack of understanding of the reasons for certain government actions and policies, rather than what those actions and policies are.

Another item asked whether people in government waste money paid in taxes. The question did not specify which level of government was involved. Especially in the wake of an election, citizens may have responded to tax issues most salient to them. A voter upset over high local property taxes may have indicated government wastes a lot of tax money while his attitude toward federal government programs could differ. In 1968 and 1970 the Vietnam war and its cost were issues of national importance; responses might have been to whether the respondent felt expenditures for this one highly dominant issue were justified or not.

while he may also believe other expenditures were warranted. The meaning of "a lot," "some," and "not much" may depend on attitudes toward the government in power--at any level--and expectations of efficiency.

One item asked respondents how much of the time they trust the government in Washington to do what is right. Responses may have been influenced by results of the recent elections, the dominant issues of the time, and interpretations of what is "right." If, for example, the Vietnam war was a dominant issue to a respondent and he opposed the war, his response may have been negative although he might trust government completely on other issues.

Limitations on demographic data in the surveys make the FIC Central City versus Non-FIC City comparison also a large-urban-area versus small-urban-area comparison. Central city areas of the 12 largest SMSA's may be sufficiently different from Non-FIC Cities in some respects that any FIC program effects would be hidden. Differences in racial composition, political party identification, socio-economic status and education between the large metropolitan areas and smaller areas may affect results. As Converse points out, political efficacy is strongly related to level of education.[8] Campbell says women have lower efficacy than men, blacks lower than whites, Southerners lower than Northerners, people with low levels of education have lower efficacy than those with higher education, low income groups

have lower efficacy than higher income groups, and people under age 34 and over 55 have lower efficacy than those 35 to 54.[9] Differences found between FIC Central Cities and FIC City Suburbs seem to support the idea that central city areas differ from other categories in ways other than exposure to FIC's. Effects on attitudes caused by the FIC program could be completely hidden by other differences between the categories which were not controlled.

In recent years, large cities have been plagued with problems ranging from racial, economic, breakdown of public services and utilities, crime and high taxes to unemployment. General dissatisfaction with city government and urban life may influence attitudes toward government in general which could cancel observable FIC program effects. Increasing disenchantment prompted by political assassinations, escalation of the Vietnam war and general war weariness, resentment to forced school integration, race riots, campus disorders and general urban disorder may hide program effects.

One unanswerable question is how long must an FIC serve a city in order for it to affect attitudes--if it has an effect? Perhaps an examination of the program several years hence would be more useful.

Between individual FIC's there is much variation in local publicity on the program, in the extent to which staff actively solicit inquiries, and in the extent to which

employees are active in civic affairs and thus bring the program to more people. One might expect that the inquiries received by centers would be roughly proportional to the size population served. This is not the case. Philadelphia, for example, is the fourth largest city in the United States and has had an FIC since October 1969, but it ranks 27 out of 35 centers in total inquiries for fiscal year 1972. Detroit, the fifth largest city with an FIC ranks 21 out of 35 and Baltimore, the 10th largest city with an FIC ranks 22. Thus, FIC's in different cities do not "serve" citizens equally. Those centers in the sample which reach fewer citizens may offset effects of the centers which do better.

The first phase of this examination indicated that about 75 per cent of the persons using FIC's are "first time" users; the others have used the service repeatedly. Applying this proportion to the FIC Central Cities category, this means less than 19 per cent of that population used the centers. The survey samples may have been too small to reflect this relatively small number. If the program does enhance attitudes toward the government, it must reach enough people in the sample for these changes to be noticeable.

Finally, one might ask whether the improvement of attitudes toward government is a reasonable function to expect of the program. The act of providing information

and referrals as the centers do may have little effect on attitudes, but the nature of that information and its application might. There are different levels or categories of information involved, some of which may affect attitudes while others do not. The nature and use of information received is also pertinent. For example, if two persons use the program to find out if they are eligible for food stamps, and one finds out he is not eligible, attitudes toward the government between the two may differ, although both received the same information. A person who seeks another category or level of information, e.g., whether a post office is open on Saturday, may be unaffected by the program's service to him.

In summary, this study fails to show that the Federal Information Center program has had any measurable effect on attitudes toward the government for the years and places examined. This failure, however, does not indicate that the program has no effect. The survey data are not ideal, there are too many variables which cannot be controlled, questions are not explicitly worded, the times the surveys were conducted may have confused results, and demographic variables are limited. The data are not suitable and sensitive enough to test the hypothesis.

The data do indicate substantial dissatisfaction with government, a lack of trust in government, and they show a need for both effective information programs from

government to citizens and effective channels for feedback from citizens to government.

FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER V

[1]The 1964 SRC Election Study (8473) (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Inter-University Consortium for Political Research, 1971); The Survey Research Center 1966 Election Study (5041) (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Inter-University Consortium for Political Research, 1968); The SRC 1968 American National Election Study (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Inter-University Consortium for Political Research, 1971); The CPS 1970 American National Election Study (49517) (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Inter-University Consortium for Political Research, 1971).

[2]Angus Campbell, Gerald Gurin and Warren E. Miller, The Voter Decides (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1971), p. 187. Originally published in 1954.

[3]Ibid., p. 189.

[4]Data for 1970 were obtained from the SRC Election Survey; earlier data are from Philip E. Converse, "Change in the American Electorate," in The Human Meaning of Social Change, Angus Campbell and Philip E. Converse, eds. (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1972), p. 328.

[5]Philip E. Converse, "Change in the American Electorate," in The Human Meaning of Social Change, Angus Campbell and Philip E. Converse, eds. (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1972), p. 325.

[6]Based on SRC Election Surveys.

[7]Philip E. Converse, "Change in the American Electorate," p. 328.

[8]Ibid., p. 325.

[9]Campbell, Gurin and Miller, The Voter Decides, p. 191.

NOTES TO CHAPTER V

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

General

With the growing size, complexity and scope of modern government, there is an increasing need for the dissemination of relevant information from government to citizens. Citizens need government information to make decisions in the conduct of their lives, to avail themselves of government services and to understand the complexities and functions of government.

Government produces much information of potential value to citizens--information derived through research and experience. Government is obligated to ensure its citizens derive maximum benefit from services and programs. And, there is need to create an informed public who knows, understands and supports government's efforts. Communication is critical in achieving these goals.

Government needs intelligence about its publics; the effectiveness of government and government-citizen communication depends on how well government responds to information and other needs of its citizens. Feedback to government can be nonpurposive, discerned on the basis of

CHAPTER XI

[illegible] and Elections

Abstract

[illegible] the friendly view--unfortunately not enough of
regular elections. There is no inconsistency [illegible]
consideration of relevant information [illegible] evaluation of
officers. Citizens need [illegible] information in order
decisions in the economy or their lives. The usual theoretical
of government services and to understand the consequences
and [illegible] of alternatives.

[illegible] problems [illegible] information by politicians
value to citizens--information derived strongly [illegible]
experience. Investment is delayed or reduces its utilities
during recession benefit [illegible] services and [illegible].
Chaos is used to attack an already [illegible].

[illegible] and economic [illegible]'s effects. Consumption
tion is critical in [illegible] above [illegible].

Government needs [illegible] about its [illegible]
the effectiveness of [illegible] and [illegible]-sitters com-
municating [illegible] as how well [illegible] is
information and other needs of its citizens. Knowledge of
[illegible] can be [illegible]. Elections or the [illegible]

citizen requests for information, citizen questions, and participation in programs and services; or purposive in that it is actively solicited. In either case, government is obligated to listen to citizens so its responses will be relevant and effective, so public confidence in government will be maintained, and integrity of government will be maintained.

The problem of two-way government-citizen communication in an increasingly complex society has received much attention over the years and around the world. Aside from formal public information programs and traditional feedback through legislators and opinion surveys, there have been other important efforts to establish effective channels of two-way communication.

The ombudsman concept involves a high-level, independent official of the government who receives citizen complaints and questions, investigates and recommends corrective action. His function is primarily one of responding to feedback from the public. Such a program has been implemented at national levels abroad and at local levels in the United States.

Great Britain's Citizens' Advice Bureaus are neighborhood centers which respond to citizen inquiries for information, advice and assistance. The bureaus perform an ombudsman function for citizens, provide a variety of social-service functions, and provide feedback to the

national government on citizens' needs, problems, and the adequacy of government services.

Canada's Information Canada Centers disseminate information and publications in response to citizen inquiries, collect and report nonpurposive feedback to identify information needs of the public, and actively solicit citizens' comments, suggestions and complaints. The program is new and controversial.

In the United States, President Franklin D. Roosevelt established a variety of agencies in the 1930's at the county, state and national levels to disseminate information on federal programs, coordinate the outflow of government information, respond to citizen inquiries and problems, and report public opinion and feedback to federal executives.

Subsequent to FDR's era, a variety of individual agency information programs were developed to help citizens avail themselves of federal information, programs, benefits, to explain regulations and procedures, and to provide some measure of feedback. Thousands of federal offices across the nation dispense specialized information, respond to inquiries, and are potential sources of feedback. These channels of communication, however, are specialized, basically uncoordinated and operate with varying degrees of success. Although more information is available at more contact points, the magnitude and complexity of this

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [

situation adds to the confusion of citizens in obtaining information and assistance needed.

Origin and Growth of the Federal Information Center Program

President Lyndon B. Johnson recognized problems inherent in this situation and the difficulty in providing citizens the services to which they are entitled. In mid-1965 the President asked Civil Service Commission Chairman John W. Macy, Jr., to examine government practices and suggest ways to improve service. Macy's response prompted a November 1, 1965, directive from President Johnson which initiated a government-wide program to improve service to the public and formed a committee of high-level officials charged with this task.

Macy coordinated the program and headed the committee charged with implementing the program. In his first progress report to the President, released February 26, 1966, Macy said planning was underway for a series of "central information points" to provide information and referral service on all federal activities. This plan resulted in the Federal Information Center program.

It appears that the basic concept for the program originated with Macy, but that the idea was refined and clarified through discussions with committee officials. That the program appeared in Macy's first report as a plan underway, under Macy's personal guidance, after one meeting

[illegible] [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

of the committee, supports this assumption.

President Johnson's part in initiating the program is unclear. Lyndon Johnson had an important role in the Roosevelt administration, and should have been aware of Roosevelt's information agencies which performed functions similar to Federal Information Centers. However, neither Bill Moyers nor Robert H. Fleming--press aides to President Johnson when the FIC program was initiated--report any knowledge of such a program.[1] This indicates that White House involvement was minimal, other than a general concern for improving service to the public. Former President Johnson and John W. Macy, Jr., have not responded to letters on this.

Knowledge of the British Citizens' Advice Bureaus and the ombudsman concept, then being discussed nationally and in Congress, are probable contributors to genesis of the program. The impetus leading to the 1966 Freedom of Information Act may have had an indirect influence, but this is unsubstantiated. Professor Alfred J. Kahn's Columbia University School of Social Work study on neighborhood information centers could not have influenced initiation of the program.

Why the government did not establish such a program until 1966 even though Roosevelt's New Deal programs provided ample precedent for the need and means to meet this need is unanswered.

Kahn is mistaken in his study that the program originated with the Interagency Advisory Group--an organization devoted to federal personnel matters. This error is understandable since Macy and other officials were involved in both the Interagency Advisory Group and the committee to improve service to the public, and the groups sometimes met together.[2]

Atlanta, Georgia, was selected for the first Federal Information Center apparently because the dispersion and number of federal agencies there prompted the greatest need. Atlanta was a GSA regional headquarters and since the policy was that centers would be established first in regional cities, Atlanta competed with only nine other cities for the first center, four of which cities were smaller in population.

From the beginning of the program, GSA officials were directly involved. This, coupled with GSA's administrative functions, their "ownership" of federal buildings, and the information functions being performed by GSA when the program began caused the program to be placed under GSA's cognizance.

After Atlanta, the FIC program grew slowly at first, with centers being opened generally in order of decreasing city population, influenced by the philosophy that centers should operate under organizations of federal officials, and influenced by the initiative of regional officials in

asking for centers.

The first eight centers were opened in GSA regional cities; following these, it was sufficient that a city have a Federal Executive Board to rate a center. Centers were next opened in cities with Federal Executive Associations, and the latest centers serve neither type organization. This change may reflect the realization that centers perform a useful function beyond serving an organization of federal officials, and that although the presence of these organizations are indices of the size and complexity of the federal community, cities without such coordinating bodies have equal if not greater need for centers.

When the Kansas City, Missouri, FIC opened April 24, 1967, a Government Printing Office bookstore opened at the same time in the same building, the second such bookstore outside of Washington, D. C. The alliance of an FIC and a bookstore is a desirable one, but only one-third of the FIC's have GPO bookstores in the same city. Although some centers stock a few GPO publications, all carry catalogs and order blanks and a third have bookstores nearby, the two information functions remain essentially separate--unlike the complete integration of the functions in Information Canada. Nevertheless, FIC's are desirable and logical distribution points for both government publications and for publicity on publications. Responses to inquiries can take the form of publications and pamphlets as well as

oral information, and referrals can be to publications as well as to other agencies. FIC location, configuration, and public contact make the centers ideal contact points for all forms of information.

The program expanded at a more rapid rate under President Nixon's encouragement than it did under President Johnson.

The use of FIC's as outlets for consumer publications was a service added by the Nixon administration. The service is a desirable one, but the fact that some publications can be obtained free from originating agencies, while they are sold through the centers, is a drawback. Of about 200 titles available each quarter, the centers stock only a small percentage.

Despite President Nixon's directive of October 27, 1969, that local governments be invited to participate in the program, only the San Diego, California, FIC is integrated with information centers of other levels of government. Most FIC's operate in cities which have similar information centers. Some FIC supervisors say that failure to integrate with other centers is a shortcoming of the program.

Although FIC's provide information and referral services for local as well as federal agencies, it is doubtful that this is done with the same efficiency and expertise as for federal agencies. If federal agencies do

poorly in updating functional directories in the centers, non-federal agencies may do worse since the relationship between centers and these agencies is less direct. Failure to integrate information centers may be due to a lack of initiative on the part of federal officials or a lack of interest and cooperation on the part of local officials. That the centers provide information and referrals for non-federal agencies as well as federal, despite obstacles, is a point in favor of the FIC program. Certainly citizens have need of such service.

President Nixon's Philadelphia "Listening Post" concept, initiated October 28, 1969, was an attempt to actively solicit feedback. The project failed.

Information is available to indicate how and why the listening post was initiated and how it functioned. Information on types of input, disposition of feedback and reasons for the project's failure is not as available. Six letters on this were not answered by federal officials who would have access to such information.

Based on other evidence, it appears there were several reasons why the listening post failed. First, it may not have been adequately publicized. Low level of input, comments by the press and statements by government officials support this. The government's statement that the mass media are to blame for lack of publicity is insufficient. Secondly, design of the program may have been

faulty. Citizens were led to believe this was a channel of communication to the White House, while in reality it never was nor was it planned to be. Public dissatisfaction with responses from low-level officials--and subsequent "word-of-mouth" publicity--would do little to enhance the program. Finally, press reports indicate a lack of support and coordination at the national level. Minutes of the February 12, 1970, meeting of officials hint at CSC Chairman Hampton's frustration with agency support of the project. This same meeting report indicates that officials were no longer required to make reports of inquiries received and responses sent.

In view of President Nixon's apparent interest in the listening post project, this lack of support is confusing. Why the project was canceled after Philadelphia rather than modified to correct deficiencies has not been determined. Queries on this matter have not been answered by government officials.

The selection of Philadelphia as the first listening post is probably due to the fact that Philadelphia was the first new center to open under President Nixon's expansion of the program. Although two centers had opened immediately after the President took office, they had been planned during the Johnson administration.

Philadelphia is the fourth largest city in the United States, but for fiscal year 1971 it ranked 23 out of

26 centers in total inquiries received, and ranked 27 out of 35 centers for fiscal year 1972. These low inquiry levels may indicate factors peculiar to Philadelphia which in some way hampered success of the listening post experiment. Perhaps selection of another city would have produced different results.

The addition of tie-line cities to the program in late 1969 was a logical move since it--in theory--brings the program to more people with minimal additional cost. Yet, tie-line cities account for more than 21 per cent of the population served by the program, but less than six per cent of total inquiries for fiscal year 1972. Lack of physical access to FIC's by tie-line citizens would account for part of this difference. The remainder may be due to differences in publicity between primary and tie-line cities, and because active solicitation of inquiries by FIC personnel is concentrated in primary FIC cities. To the extent, therefore, that the program does not reach all people equally, it does not serve all equally.

In tie-line cities, FIC telephone numbers are advertised as toll-free. This is not the case with telephone numbers of federal agencies located in primary FIC cities. When a call is received from a tie-line city and requires referral, centers either transfer the call to the appropriate agency or tell the inquirer he will be called back by the agency concerned. Should it be impossible to transfer

the incoming call upon receipt, or should an agency not return the call within the expected time, a tie-line citizen is faced with making a toll telephone call for the information he needs.

The Program Today

As of November 1, 1972, the program consists of centers in 36 metropolitan areas and tie-lines to 37 additional cities.

Centers receive citizen inquiries through face-to-face contact, telephone and letters. Letter inquiries constitute a small percentage of inquiries. About half the inquiries received are answered completely by FIC staff; the remainder are referred to other agencies. Almost half the inquirers say their local telephone directory was the source of information about the program. About one-fourth of the inquirers have used FIC services before. Most inquirers do not know the appropriate agency to contact when they call an FIC.

Inquiries pertain to a large number of agencies and offices, with no one agency clearly dominating the others, although the Department of the Treasury (IRS) and Department of Health, Education and Welfare head the list. There are seasonal and geographic variations in the level of inquiries and agencies to which they pertain. Referrals to these agencies are accurate and responses to inquiries are generally satisfactory.

Subject matter of inquiries covers a wide spectrum of topics. Business-related inquiries account for almost one-third of the total. A large portion of "personal" inquiries deal with economic matters, e.g., taxes, government employment, personal finance, social security, consumer complaints, and the like.

Based on inquiry subjects, one can speculate as to the people and groups who make use of the FIC program. On the one hand, there are relatively few inquiries concerning minority group problems, welfare and social services, discrimination and other related matters. On the other hand, people concerned with their businesses, with foreign travel as private citizens, hobbies and recreation, and with income taxes are probably not from among the economically deprived or disadvantaged groups either in society as a whole or in the large metropolitan areas served by the program. The nature of inquiries seems to imply that people are concerned primarily with their own private lives, finances and occupations. As Walter Lippmann points out, people have little time--or inclination--to devote attention to matters outside their personal worlds.[3]

Albuquerque, New Mexico, has the smallest population of any city with its own FIC. There are smaller cities with tie-lines, but none with a center. There are 32 SMSA's in the continental United States which have neither a center nor a tie-line but which have greater populations than

Albuquerque. Based on population alone, there are many metropolitan areas which qualify for centers. Whether these cities have sufficient federal agencies to warrant a center was not determined.

The General Services Administration reports that the program reaches about 50 per cent of the U. S. population. Using 1970 census data for Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas, the program is available to about 48 per cent of the continental U. S. population, and about 47.5 per cent of the entire population. Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas include the entire county in which a city is located and adjacent counties metropolitan in character and economically and socially integrated with the county of the primary city.[4] Thus, SMSA statistics may include areas which do not have toll-free telephone access to an FIC and limited physical access--depending on the configuration of the SMSA and extent of toll-free telephone service between a city and its surroundings. In terms of toll-free telephone and walk-in access, the program could reach less than 48 per cent of the population. This portion of the population is urban and suburban; small cities, towns and rural areas are excluded for all practical purposes. The program is more "urban" than "national."

The program costs about $1.4 million annually, shared equally by 16 federal departments and agencies. Washington officials report they are considering a change

which will obtain more funds from more than the 16 agencies. This is desirable and logical. For one reason, some agencies receive a relatively large proportion of inquiries but contribute nothing to the program. The Department of State, for example, was fourth in number of inquiries received for fiscal year 1972, but it gives no financial support to the program. The Small Business Administration received only 1.6 per cent of the inquiries for fiscal year 1972 compared to the Department of State's 7.3 per cent, yet it contributed the same as agencies receiving almost 15 per cent of the inquiries. Since the centers help advertise, explain and implement the programs and services operated by the agencies, it follows that those agencies so benefited should be liable for a portion of the program's cost. For another reason, some FIC supervisors report that they do not actively solicit inquiries--and thus do not bring the program to all who may have need of it--because present level of inquiries tax the ability of center staff to handle them. More money would permit hiring more people.

The General Services Administration pays a share of the program's cost equal to 15 other agencies, but this does not include custodial services, furniture, utilities, mail and distribution expenses and more. One GSA Regional Director of Business Affairs estimates that about one-half of his time is spent on FIC-related matters.[5] This portion

of his salary, and salaries of other officials not part of the program but who give assistance of various types, is not included in direct costs. GSA contributes more than an equal share for operating the program.

In general, the program is under-publicized. That the program is potentially available to almost 50 per cent of the population is correct; that it reaches this proportion of the public is not. There is much variation between cities as to how often and how well the program is publicized, and how actively centers bring the program to more people and solicit inquiries. GSA provides regional directors with publicity materials and guidance, but it is up to local officials and the centers themselves to publicize the program. Some centers have ambitious programs in this respect; others do not. One might assume that the number of inquiries received by a center should be roughly proportional to the size population served. That these figures do not match supports the idea that publicity and initiative vary between centers. Table 13 lists the 11 largest cities with centers, and their ranking for fiscal year 1972 in total inquiries received, out of 35 centers.

Reluctance to publicize the program outside cities served because this may prompt telephone calls from outside toll-free areas is understandable. But properly worded and targeted publicity might offset this potential disadvantage. Outside the immediate areas served, centers could be

advertised as points of contact for letter inquiries only. Even though citizens may not have physical or free telephone access to a center, it may be valuable to know of an agency in a nearby city to which citizens could write with some assurance that their letters will reach the appropriate agencies. There are many businesses, institutions and private organizations with Wide Area Telephone Service (WATS) which have toll-free access to centers, if they knew of the service. Many organizations--and even citizens--may consider it worth the cost of a toll call to obtain badly needed information. Businessmen, farmers and professional men who make toll telephone calls as legitimate business expenses may deduct the cost of such calls from their income tax.[6]

TABLE 13

RANKING BY INQUIRIES OF THE ELEVEN LARGEST CITIES WITH FIC'S

Cities in Order of Population	Ranking by Inquiries
New York	2
Los Angeles	4
Chicago	7
Philadelphia	27
Detroit	21
San Francisco	3
Boston	1
Pittsburgh	19
St. Louis	18
Baltimore	22
Cleveland	10

TABLE 13

Cities in order of Population	Ranking by Temperature
New York	3
Los Angeles	4
Chicago	7
Philadelphia	17
Detroit	11
San Francisco	2
Boston	1
Pittsburgh	15
St. Louis	10
Baltimore	13
Cleveland	14

Failure to publicize the program outside the metropolitan areas served or to bring it to all citizens even within the areas served is in essence depriving those excluded citizens of their right to public information. A report of a study of public information by the government of Sweden points out that for information on rights and obligations, government decisions, laws and social services, ". . . every individual involved should enjoy the same standard of information, irrespective of whether or not it costs more or is technically more difficult to reach certain people."[7] The obligation of government to inform its citizens and the right of those citizens to the information government possesses is discussed in Chapter I. To the extent that citizens have a right to certain categories of information produced by government, that right is shared equally. Government has, therefore, an obligation to ensure that all citizens have equal access to this information. Equal availability of the mechanisms for obtaining information is important to this goal. Failure to provide access to FIC services to citizens outside the cities served or to certain groups within areas served deprives some citizens of the tools or mechanisms necessary to avail themselves of information and other services to which they are entitled. In practice, the principle that every citizen has equal right to the same information cannot always be complied with for technical and economic reasons, but it is

a goal which government is obligated to pursue.

GSA's pamphlet advertising the program, issued August 1972, was overdue. Granted, any earlier pamphlet would have been outdated the moment it was distributed due to the frequency with which centers opened, but a pamphlet describing the purpose and functions of the centers has long been needed. Even this first one does not list the Sacramento FIC which opened in October 1972. The pamphlet gives area codes for FIC telephone numbers--a practice which could prompt telephone calls from outside toll-free areas. The pamphlet says most FIC's have a bilingual capability, which is not correct. It also says, "If you do not speak English, the centers can still help." Chances are that people who do not speak English do not read English. But despite these minor faults, the pamphlet fills a real need.

Publicity for Government Printing Office and Consumer Product Information publications is not within the responsibility of the FIC Coordinator. For the FIC programs, most responsibility and authority for publicity is decentralized to regional directors and the centers themselves. In this situation, the Coordinator cannot direct, only urge, encourage, coordinate and guide.

The Advertising Council, an organization supported by the various associations in the advertising industry, individual advertisers, agencies and advertising media,

conducts public service advertising campaigns on behalf of government, organizations and private individuals. Recent campaigns have included forest fire prevention, aid to higher education, mental retardation, traffic safety, savings bonds and youth fitness.[8] The assistance and expertise of such an organization in publicizing the program and bringing FIC services to the maximum number of citizens possible should not be overlooked.

The study data reported in Chapter V seem to indicate that publicizing the program through local telephone directories is well justified. This does not necessarily indicate that mass media publicity is unwarranted, since the role and effects of the media are unclear. Perhaps publicity which directs attention toward the existence of the program, and toward telephone directories as means for obtaining service--coupled with easily remembered slogans or symbols, would be an effective combination.

The data also indicate that word-of-mouth publicity, other federal agencies, telephone operators and "point of purchase" advertising are valuable. Thus, letters and pamphlets to "opinion leaders"--heads of civic, private and religious groups--pamphlets and posters in federal and non-federal offices, close relations with telephone company officials, and conspicuous signs in the vicinity of the centers would seem to be warranted. The program is an ideal speech topic for presentation by FIC employees and local

officials to civic and service groups.

The FIC program does not simply dispense information to the public; FIC's wait to be asked. Only citizens who have problems or need information and know of the program derive benefit from it. Publicity is critical to the accomplishment of the program's goals.

Officials state they are currently considering foreign language radio spots, a toll-free, state-wide telephone number for the FIC's, and establishment of an FIC in Washington, D. C. All of these proposals seem warranted. Foreign language publicity is necessary if the program is to reach those citizens outside the normal channels of communication. Precedent for a Washington, D. C., information center dates back to President Roosevelt's administration, although--as program officials point out--there are a number of important questions to be resolved before a Washington, D. C., center becomes a reality.

Federal Communications Commissioner Nicholas Johnson recently proposed that the government establish free telephone service from citizens to federal agencies in Washington, D. C.[9] A system called "inward WATS," Johnson says, could and should be implemented to allow citizens nationwide to contact, toll-free, government officials who can answer citizen questions and solve problems. It appears that Johnson is unaware of the FIC program and the fact that it already provides a portion of the service he advocates to

a large portion of the population. It may be far more practical to terminate inward WATS telephone lines at FIC's around the country than to provide every citizen toll-free telephone service direct to Washington, D. C., as Johnson suggests. Johnson indicates the cost of providing free telephone service to Washington, D. C., would be in excess of $2.5 million annually. The cost of implementing such a service within the FIC program is unknown; besides the cost of telephone service, more personnel would be required.

Evaluation of the Program

An evaluation of the FIC program is difficult. It is more effective than no program at all, but beyond this there is no standard against which the program's performance can be compared. Program officials judge the program to be effective on the basis of the few complaints received and on the level of inquiries. But many persons do not complain even when given cause. The level of inquiries is a valid index of effectiveness when compared against some standard, e.g., how many inquiries might the program handle if all centers operated at peak efficiency, were all highly publicized, etc. The volume of inquiries now received may be far less than the program's potential even with existing personnel and facilities.

Among the individual centers there is much variation in inquiry levels; the effectiveness of individual centers can be judged in terms of inquiries per unit of population

served since other centers provide a standard. For example, overall the program receives one inquiry for about every 20 persons served, or 50 inquiries per 1,000 population served. But one FIC receives one inquiry for every three persons served or 330 per 1,000 population, while another receives one inquiry for every 97 or 13 per 1,000 population served. Thus, one could say the program is less effective than it could be in the sense that variations between centers might be reduced, and the overall inquiries received per unit population served might be increased.

Other than lack of complaints and inquiry level, no evaluation of the program's effects or effectiveness has been conducted by Washington, D. C., officials. To some extent, the data in this thesis can be used as a starting point or standard against which future performance of the program can be compared.

The program can be examined in terms of what it was designed to do. Based on documents initiating the program, its basic purpose is to help citizens find their way through the maze of government agencies, and by this to improve service to the public. Data indicate that almost two-thirds of the people using the service do not know the correct agency to contact to help them with their questions and problems. Without a program, some of these might never have reached the correct office. In this respect, the program does aid citizens to locate the agencies needed, and it

does help people through the maze of government organization and functioning. According to the feasibility study reported in Chapter III which preceded opening of the first FIC, at least one out of 20 of these inquiries would never have reached the right agency. Alfred J. Kahn's New York City study reported in Chapter II indicated that, without an agency such as an FIC, one-third of all inquiries end without conclusive answers, and the rest take about three and one-half telephone calls to get the necessary information from the correct agency.

One can also examine the complete government-citizen communication cycle of which the program is a part. Centers provide an accessible, available upward communication link for citizens to speak with government. For those inquiries which centers answer completely, the program completes the communication cycle. For inquiries referred to other agencies, completion of the link is left to others. Based on the data in Chapter V, this link, too, is generally well-completed, although there is no standard for comparison. Whether this completed cycle improves service to the public as the program was designed to do is difficult to assess. Assuming that without a program fewer citizens would reach the appropriate agencies, and based on the data in Chapter V, one can conclude that the program improves service to the public in that it makes service more accessible and brings service to more people. Quality of that

service is another matter. But, if responses to the question concerning how well inquiries are answered by federal agencies are valid, then the quality of this service is good. No evidence is available to indicate whether quality has improved or not with the advent of the FIC program.

It is interesting that as part of the study reported in Chapter V, a number of FIC personnel reported that many inquirers were very satisfied and favorably impressed with the "call-back" to determine if their questions had been satisfactorily answered. The value of such a simple technique to both enhance attitudes toward the government and to help ensure the quality and completeness of information provided citizens should not be overlooked.

One might also ask whether the program brings government and citizens closer together as advertised. If the program helps citizens find their way among the maze of federal agencies and programs, helps citizens take advantage of benefits available to them, and aids in telling citizens what government is doing for them, there may be differences in attitudes toward the government between citizens served by the program and those not served, and among citizens in an area before and after the program came on the scene. A study to examine this aspect of the program failed to show significant attitudinal differences between those served by the program and those not served, and differences within a

population before and after the program began.

These results, however, are inconclusive to indicate that the program either has or has had no effect. The data are insufficient and insensitive to measure the necessary variables while controlling all others. It is not illogical to assume that citizens who receive answers to their questions, solutions to their problems, information, services and benefits from the government--by using the FIC services--will be more favorably disposed toward the source of that assistance. Conditioning and social learning theory support the concept that the source of gratification is perceived more favorably by the receiver after gratification takes place.[10] These theories not only imply that citizen attitudes toward the government will be enhanced through the process of receiving useful information from the government, but that use of this service should be repeated.

Despite the lack of evidence that the program enhances attitudes, the program does have an important role in the government-citizen communication link. Evidence supports the idea that centers are effective contact points --or communication terminals--between government and citizens. The centers act as tools for citizens to penetrate the maze of federal agencies, they serve to remove artificial restrictions on the flow of information, and enhance the positive flow of information from government to citizens. The program aids in "targeting" government

information in that only those citizens in need of information ask for it, but it does not reach all those in need or all those who have a right to such information.

For "low-level" information, the "where do I . . . . who can help me . . . . what is the number for . . ." inquiries, centers effectively complete the government-citizen communication cycle. For higher level information, e.g., information on regulations, procedures, programs and services, the centers are an important link in the communication cycle, providing a positive upward channel, and enhancing the likelihood of downward communication through referral to the proper agencies. Centers act as nerve centers, receiving impulses from the public and redirecting them to the appropriate response organs, enhancing the likelihood of response, but neither guaranteeing it nor ensuring its quality.

Scott M. Cutlip says these are generally agreed upon objectives for a continuing public relations program in government:[11]

- To win consent for new laws and new reforms dictated by the needs of an ever-changing, technological society;

- To overcome apathy and bewilderment toward new and complex functions of government;

- To keep the citizen informed of the services and functions provided so he may participate and gain full benefit from them;

- To provide the citizen usable devices for relaying

his views and opinions to the administrator without employing intermediaries;

- To interpret public opinion to the law enforcement agencies so that regulations will be realistic and acceptable;

- To crystallize public sentiment and pave the way for noncoercive compliance;

- To build a reservoir of support for an agency.

The FIC program as an entity falls short of fully qualifying as a "public relations" program in this sense, but it is a valuable and necessary channel of communications --an intermediary--between the public and the agencies charged with meeting these objectives. It does not accomplish these goals directly, it only enhances the ease and efficiency with which other agencies may pursue these objectives.

Feedback is not a stated purpose of the program, but it has that potential. The nature of inquiries received, publications requested or distributed, and the agencies receiving inquiries indicate what people are concerned with, what information they need, and who should provide that information. It is difficult for this study to conclude what are the specific needs and concerns of citizens, and the agency action to be taken to meet these needs. The way to do this is to examine inquiries received, by type and agency concerned, and evaluate these inquiries in terms of agency services and information about these services, nationally and regionally. Such an evaluation is

his views and opinions to the administrator without employ-
ing intermediaries.

- To increase public opinion to the time required
must exercise no other vocations with is realistic and
accomplish:

- To create within ourselves and pass the way
the unnecessary complicated

- To unify a necessity of subject for an agency.

The KSI Purpose as an entity fails short of fully
qualifying as a "public relations" program in this sense.
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But it has that potential. The nature of inquiries
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citizens, and the agency action it be taken to meet these
needs. The way to do this is to examine inquiries received,
by type and agency concerned, and evaluate them inquiries
in terms of agency objectives and literature about them
available, validity and reliability. Such an evaluation is

not simple, and centers do not now collect and report the required information. But the centers exist and they can obtain the data. Failure of federal agencies to recognize and use this source of information says little for their interest in ascertaining the needs of those they serve and in meeting those needs. Traditional public information programs emphasize the quantity of information poured outward with little regard for the information needs of citizens. The FIC program represents a valuable source of untapped information. If the failure of government to respond to the needs of its citizens is a cause of the malaise in society as some scholars contend, this failure may be attributed in part to government's failure to recognize and use information available to enhance that response.

The initiative for requesting and using such information rests with agencies served and with officials at a higher echelon than those directly concerned with the FIC program. This thesis is a sample of the vast amount of data which can be derived from the program--data useful for a variety of purposes. One employee at the national level, with limited authority, simply does not have the time to thoroughly analyze and use the information now available, much less additional data, especially that available through some system of feedback.

Beyond nonpurposive feedback, the centers are potential sources of purposive, solicited feedback as well.

Although the Philadelphia listening post experiment failed, there appear to be logical reasons why it did. As a channel for citizen complaints, suggestions and comments to government, the centers are uniquely appropriate, provided the feedback program is properly designed, publicized locally, and supported nationally. The importance of such feedback, coupled with the availability of the centers to collect it and government's need to devise ways to be more responsive to those it serves, justifies another listening post experiment.

Use of the centers as channels for overt feedback does not replace more traditional forms of feedback through legislators, agencies and opinion surveys, but the program could be an important supplement. Feedback of the type obtained through listening posts would not represent "public opinion," nor would the people using this communication channel be representative of the population as a whole or of the population served by the program. People who make suggestions or complain to congressmen and other public officials are not "typical" citizens.

Using the 1968 American National Election Study data,[12] only 16 per cent of the sample indicated that they had ever written or contacted a public official at any level for purposes of complaining or suggesting. Of this group, most resided in suburbs of large cities or in small towns. Republicans were more likely to contact public officials

than Democrats or independents, more were between the ages of 38 to 48 than any other age group, over 80 per cent were high school graduates and more than one-third had some college education, over half were professional people, students or housewives, 70 per cent described themselves as middle-to-upper class, more than two-thirds were Protestants, more than half had incomes over $10,000 yearly, half were women and 95 per cent were whites.

Nevertheless, the FIC program is an available feedback channel, an important vehicle for receiving and forwarding to appropriate authorities complaints, grievances and suggestions from citizens who may not otherwise know how, where and to whom they may communicate. Just as the centers are receivers for citizen questions, directing inquiries to appropriate agencies for response, they can perform the same function for complaints and comments. The addition of this service might not require more staff or facilities, but would demand more publicity and much cooperation and support from other agencies and from federal officials at higher echelons.

That there are things the FIC program might do beyond what it is now doing is apparent. These do not necessarily represent corrections for shortcomings, but are suggestions for expanding the service and for reaching more people. Certainly they are made without full consideration of policy, personnel, space and budgetary limitations known

only to those directly involved in the program. Nevertheless, those responsible for the FIC program might consider:

- Adopting a symbol such as the British CAB owl to represent the program;

- Distributing Washington-oriented posters advertising the program to all federal, state, city, civic, and private agencies where they will reach large numbers of people;

- Distributing foreign language pamphlets on the program to cities with large foreign language populations;

- Advertising the program outside of cities served as a point of contact for letter inquiries;

- Advertising the program outside of cities served on a selective basis for businesses, institutions and private organizations;

- Arranging with The Advertising Council for a public service campaign to advertise the program nationally;

- Making a greater effort to publicize the program in areas served, especially in tie-line cities;

- Encouraging the stocking and distribution of federal and non-federal forms, applications and brochures through centers;

- Encouraging the active solicitation of inquiries by center staff;

- Encouraging active participation of center staff in community affairs, as members of civic organizations, speakers, etc.

- Increasing the GSA staff charged with coordinating the program so that more can be done;

- Encouraging more feedback from the centers on their promotional techniques, collateral duties, successful publicity, etc., with a view toward sharing this information, discussing problems, standardizing operating procedures and enhancing efficiency by a periodic newsletter to all centers;

- Increasing the number of consumer publications distributed through centers;

- Attempting to integrate centers with information centers of other levels of government;

- Investigating the variations between centers in types and volume of inquiries, efficiency, initiative and additional services, with a view toward increasing the efficiency and service of each center;

- Using data processing to facilitate the collection, reporting and analysis of statistical data;

- Conducting periodic surveys to examine the accuracy of referrals and accuracy of agency responses to inquiries, obtaining a large enough sample to permit a valid center versus center and agency versus agency comparison;

- Conducting periodic surveys to ascertain attitudes toward government of those served by the program; centers could survey people who use the program versus those who do not, with both groups in the same city and controlling socio-economic and other variables; cities with centers and those without could be equated in terms of size, location and other factors and then compared, obtaining large enough samples to permit a city-by-city comparison; centers could conduct surveys over time using the same basic sample;

- Conducting periodic surveys to learn more about the people who use this service versus those who do not;

- Establishing another listening post project--correcting the apparent deficiencies of the Philadelphia experiment;

- Periodically sampling types of inquiries received, making reports to principle agencies concerned of "what people are asking about"--whether the agencies request this feedback or not;

- Using the centers as distribution points for a variety of other government information including interpretation and status of legislation, news releases on federal activities, programs and organizations, and the like;

- Giving the centers a more active role in the publicizing and distribution of Government Printing Office publications;

- Establishing "sub-centers" as satellites of a primary PIC, located in ghetto, suburban or rural areas, either permanently or temporarily (such as during income

tax time), stationary or mobile;

- In general, encourage more "out-reach" and active solicitation of inquiries, make every effort to bring the program to those people outside the normal communication channels, and make more use of the wealth of information now available and potentially available.

With a little imagination, one can envision the FIC program of the future. Citizens will contact centers over video telephones or cable television. Calls will be electronically transferred to the appropriate agencies where citizens talk with officials face-to-face over video display. When an official is unable to talk at the time of the call, inquiries will be recorded, noting the identification of the inquirer's terminal. Responses will be made by video display or printout, recorded if necessary at the inquirer's terminal. Citizens will obtain video or printed indexes of all available government information and publications, receiving video or printed responses of information needed with automatic billing to the citizen's account. Complaints and suggestions will be received on a 24-hour basis, with automatic indexing and forwarding to appropriate agencies for reply. All inquiries will be automatically recorded by type, agency, and locality, along with information on the inquirer. Summaries of inquiries will be periodically printed and distributed to officials, legislators and civic leaders, by subject, locality, agency, program and characteristics of inquirers. Inquiries will be automatically compared against agency information output,

indicating gaps in information programs overall, by area and by demographic characteristics of inquirers. Citizen satisfaction with information received will be routinely solicited and reported to the appropriate officials. Agency efficiency will be continuously monitored and reported.

Implications for Other Research

There are problems in selecting an on-going program for study. For one thing, there is a potential for change in any current program which can make the normally difficult task of research more difficult. Second, there are problems in obtaining information on current programs. Many questions may not be answered because of someone's reluctance to divulge information which might in some way reflect adversely on the program. Finally, programs which deal with sensitive subjects like current government information or are being examined during an election year pose unique problems.

Conducting research in cooperation with a public or private agency can cause difficulties in the sense that the agency may be reluctant to examine some aspects of the problem or may insist on examining aspects not important to the research. Yet, if cooperation is essential, it may be necessary to modify the research objectives or limit the questions of interest. Cooperation will normally be extended only if the study does not interfere with the program's functioning and if the research promises to be of

some value to the agency.

Secondary analysis of existing research data often appears to be a shortcut for examining variables not considered in the original research. Despite the quantity and availability of various types of data, it is difficult to isolate and control variables of interest for a study unrelated to the original. Existing data is often a poor substitute for original research despite savings in money and time. This is not to say that all existing survey data is of no value for secondary analysis; only that it is rare when existing data provide all the necessary information and controls for a subsequent examination. An existing study which comes close to the design and variables of interest for a secondary study may simply not come close enough. The attractiveness of existing data is too often influenced more by availability than suitability.

Whether original or existing data, there is difficulty in doing effective research on attitudes. Opinion surveys which measure specific responses to specific questions at specific times fail to get at latent attitudes present but not elicited; at incremental, cumulative changes in attitudes that must reach some threshold before measurement is possible; and they fail to exclude effects of dominant attitudes which mask less-salient ones. When examining effects of information programs, not only must one isolate the attitudes of interest and devise means for

measuring them amidst a wealth of others, but "information" itself must be examined by type and level. One needs to consider what information affects what attitudes at what level in what ways and if and how these effects can be measured. It may be that some types of information at some levels simply do not affect attitudes in the usual sense, but must be combined with other types of information or activities to have an observable effect.

It is clear that "communication" and "feedback" are not processes that can be examined as finite, homogeneous categories. It is easy to make generalizations about responsibility for "communication" and the need for "feedback," but there are many different types of communication and information, serving different purposes, for different audiences, at different levels of awareness and activity, just as feedback can be subtle or obvious, of different types, operating at different levels, and of differing value to the receiver. To say that a program provides effective communication and feedback, one must specify for whom, at what level and for what purpose.

Most information programs do not have designed into them mechanisms and criteria for evaluating effects and effectiveness. That such programs exist, that funds continue and that the programs appear to be doing something are often considered sufficient evidence of effectiveness. Researchers must first define effectiveness in the context

of the program and then devise means to measure it. Standards for comparison are often nonexistent. Use of different yardsticks can yield different results. There are different levels of operation to consider. To judge whether the cost of a program is warranted by its accomplishments, one must define and measure accomplishments. To judge whether a program contributes to attainment of an organization's goals, one must identify goals. To judge a program in terms of what it is supposed to accomplish, one must know what it was designed to do, what it can be expected to do with resources provided and if these functions are reasonable to expect of the program. Too often the goals or purposes of a program are not explicitly stated or are so general and ambiguous that evaluation is impossible.

Research in journalism and in public relations in particular has generally emphasized the outflow of information at the expense of upward communication, or feedback. Studies of feedback have generally been concerned with more traditional, obvious forms such as complaints, requests and suggestions. The more subtle, less traditional types of feedback deserve further examination: the forms this information can take, how it can be recognized, what translation or "decryption" is necessary for it to be useful, and how and to what it can be applied. It is clear that there are many types of feedback, that some channels are more

appropriate to some types of feedback than others, that all feedback is not clearly recognized as such and that some types of people originate feedback of certain types while others do not.

There is much to be learned about the role of information-advice-referral agencies as links in the communication cycle between an organization and its publics, as information-coordinating mechanisms, as channels for feedback in all its varieties, as devices for aiding the attainment of public information objectives, as tools for bringing information and services to those in need, and for reaching those citizens outside normal channels of communication and feedback. In an era when more information is becoming more available to more people at more contact points via more channels of communication, when demands for information are becoming more articulate and information needs are becoming more apparent, the potential of such agencies is great.

Conclusion

My hypothesis was that the Federal Information Center program provides effective channels of two-way communication between citizen and government. The hypothesis is confirmed, but with qualification. The program does not serve all those citizens it could and should. It does not provide all the services it could, nor does it provide services uniformly to all citizens to whom it is available. At one level, the program completes the government-citizen

communication cycle. At a higher level, it is a communication channel from citizens to agencies from which information is needed. It is an effective downward channel in that centers answer some inquiries completely and advise citizens where other inquiries can be answered. It is an upward channel in that it is a point of contact for citizen inquiries and it enables those citizens to reach the appropriate agencies. As a channel for feedback to government, the program's potential is untapped. Nonpurposive feedback is readily available; purposive feedback could be obtained.

In short, the program meets a real need and provides a valuable service. But it could do more.

FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER VI

[1]Letter, Robert H. Fleming, Administrative Assistant to Representative Abraham Kazen, Washington, D. C., to Author, October 2, 1972; and Letter, Bill Moyers, National Programming Division, Educational Broadcasting Corporation, New York, New York, to Author, October 11, 1972.

[2]Kahn's discussion of the FIC Program is in Alfred J. Kahn, et al, Neighborhood Information Centers: A Study and Some Proposals (New York: Columbia University School of Social Work, 1966), pps. 14, 75, 86-87. Irving Kator, assistant to Civil Service Commission Chairman Macy at the time the FIC program was initiated, said in a letter to the author, October 5, 1972, that the Interagency Advisory Group was not directly involved in implementing the FIC program. The U. S. Civil Service Commission Blueprint for the Seventies: Annual Report 1969 (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1969), p. 47, confirms that the mission of the Interagency Advisory Group is concerned with personnel matters.

[3]Walter Lippmann, Public Opinion (New York: The Free Press, 1965), pps. 23-41.

[4]Bureau of the Census, U. S. Department of Commerce, Statistical Abstract of the United States 1971 (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1971), p. 829. This reference is the source for all other population data.

[5]Private Interview, Benjamin Copenhaver, Regional Director of Business Affairs, General Services Administration Region 5, Chicago, Illinois, with Author, June 22, 1972.

[6]National Tax Training School, 1972 U. S. Master Tax Guide (New York: Commerce Clearing House, Inc., 1971), pps. 60-63.

[7]"Summary of the Report of The Swedish Royal Committee on Civic Information," April 1970, p. 6 (Typewritten). Obtained from the School of Journalism, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin.

[8]Maurice I. Mandell, Advertising (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1968), p. 639.

[illegible]

[9]Nicholas Johnson, "We Need a Free Phone Link to Our Government," Parade, September 24, 1972, p. 18.

[10]See Bernard Berelson and Gary A. Steiner, Human Behavior: An Inventory of Scientific Findings (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1964), pps. 136-156; and Albert Bandura, Social Learning Theory (New York: General Learning Press, 1971), pps. 10-27.

[11]Scott M. Cutlip and Allen H. Center, Effective Public Relations, 4th ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1971), p. 534.

[12]The Survey Research Center 1968 American National Election Study (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Inter-University Consortium for Political Research, 1971).

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

A SAMPLE OF INTERESTING INQUIRIES REPORTED BY FIC SUPERVISORS

1. How does my son get into the study of acupuncture? (Cleveland)

2. How do I arrange for obtaining a whale's heart from Japan for my science class? (Philadelphia)

3. How do you become a lobbyist with the House of Representatives? (Philadelphia)

4. Did you see my wife? (Newark)

5. How do I get my alligator out of the country? (Baltimore)

6. Did you see a little man with a little blue shirt on with the shirttail hanging out going down the escalator losing his pants looking for someone? (Baltimore--they did)

7. This man asked me things and had no prudentials--is this legal? (Baltimore)

8. A couple approached the FIC with a copy of their marriage license in Greek and wanted it translated into English to ascertain what it actually said. (New York)

9. Where can I get a coffin just like President Eisenhower's? (Los Angeles)

10. Where can I get an inspection of sea urchins for export? (Los Angeles)

11. I would like to speak with "Uncle Sam." (Pittsburgh)

12. Could you give me the names of everyone who works for the Federal Government? (Pittsburgh)

EXERCISE 9

A REVIEW OF INDEPENDENT INFINITIVE STRUCTURES

AS USE ABBREVIATIONS

1. Time goes by when you live with the study of mathematics. (Time-lapse)

2. Time do I assume you understand a woman's power from sight but do welcome silence. (Enlightening)

3. How do you propose to indulge with the theme of Impressionism? (Enlightening)

4. Dog for one of mine! (Beware)

5. Time do I bet on sightseer out at the country! (Waiting)

6. Kid for one a little was with a little pins stars on with the elephant hunting was eating down the venerable leafy pie pants landing for homework (waiting--stay kid)

7. Able man nation be sharks and bad to pronunciate--is ship jump! (waiting)

8. A movie experiencing the ESL with a body of their morning lioness in dress one wanted it examined into English as necessary when it naturally path. (Wow)

9. Where can I put a bottle just like President Eisenhower.) (Use Negative)

10. Where was I put an interview at one explain the subway? (Use Negative)

11. I would like to speak with "Uncle Sam." (Interrupt)

12. Could you give me the name of everyone who works for Federal Government. (Eavesdrop)

13. I plowed up dead bodies of soldiers killed during the Civil War. I want to rebury them legally; who should I contact? (St. Louis)

14. If the worm gets out of a Mexican jumping bean, will it hurt my shrubs? (St. Louis)

15. The mother of a 20-year-old girl called to inquire which state her daughter should visit on her vacation; the decision was to be based on which state had the lowest minimum age for purchasing liquor. (Minneapolis)

16. A woman inquired whether rabies shots were required to enter Canada from the United States. When the regulations for taking animals into Canada were explained, the woman replied that she had no dog but was concerned about shots for herself. (Portland)

17. An irate man called to report that there was no meat in his 20-cent McDonald's hamburger. (Portland)

18. Is there an embargo on importing bananas from Iceland? (Fort Worth)

19. A woman inquired about the location of the Immigration Office because her husband wanted to be neutralized. (Fort Worth)

20. Is marijuana good for high blood pressure? (Honolulu)

21. How do I start a political party? (Honolulu)

22. Is it illegal to import pornography? (Honolulu)

23. What kind of help do you need--I read the little block in the phone book where you advertised "Need More Help?" and I just wondered what kind you were looking for. (Atlanta)

24. I want that office out on Cleveland Avenue. I don't know what office it is--they told me to call you and find out. (Atlanta)

25. What are you going to do about these cats in my basement? They are spreading fleas all over my house. (Atlanta)

26. I just want to talk to somebody in the Army who can tell me what's going on. (Atlanta)

12. I phoned my food bodies of soldiers killed during the civil war. I went to robbery rather legality who should I counter? (Mr. Lewis)

14. If the worm gets out of a broken jumping bone, will it hurt my stereo? (Mr. Lewis)

15. The nucleus of a 33-year-old girl called to inquire which stage her daughter should wish on her vacation, the decision was to be based on which stage had the lowest minimum age for purchasing liquor. (Minneapolis)

16. A woman inquired whether safety shoes were required to enter Canada from the United States. When the inspector chose for visiting customs into Canada were explained, the woman replied that she had no duty but was concerned about movie the bacteria. (Portland)

17. An Arvin man called to inquire that there was no mask in his 35-year balloon's handsome. (Portland)

18. Is there an ordinance on importing bananas from Detroit (Iowa North)

19. A woman inquired about the location of the Independence office because her husband wanted to be negotiated. (Iowa North)

20. Is nutrition good for high blood pressure? (Honolulu)

21. How do I start a political party? (Honolulu)

22. Is it illegal to import pornography? (Honolulu)

23. When kind of help do you need--I just the little start in the phone book where you mentioned "need them Help." and I just wondered what kind you were looking for. (Atlanta)

24. I want that office out as directional boxcar. I don't know what within it is--they had on to call you and find out. (Atlanta)

25. What are you going to do about those cars in my house? They are interesting flame all wear my house. (Atlanta)

26. I just want to talk to somebody in the navy who can tell me what's going on. (Atlanta)

27. Internal Revenue is looking for me--where do I find them? (Atlanta)

28. Who do I talk to about a change in marital status? (Atlanta)

29. A woman had lost a page in her World Book Encyclopedia which had a song on it she liked and wanted the FIC to give her the words to it. (Atlanta)

30. I want to talk to that man who used to be over in that corner back in 1942. He used to help me with my tax returns. (Atlanta)

31. I'd like to get in touch with a federal alcoholic. (Atlanta)

32. I want the Office of the United States of America Government. (Atlanta)

33. Is this where you "settle up" with the Government? (Atlanta)

34. What office handles the "Fannie Ann Program"? (Atlanta)

35. Can you explain this hickey from IRS that I have to mail in four times a year? (Atlanta)

36. I want the Inner Office of the Defender of the Innocent. (Atlanta)

37. What is the legal drinking age in North Carolina? Well, how about South Carolina? Well, my goodness! What about Louisiana? Hallelujia Baby! I'm off to Louisiana! (Atlanta)

38. What places in the United States would issue a marriage license to a "gay" couple? (Seattle)

39. To whom do I report sightings of flying saucers? (Buffalo)

40. I feed my pet rattlesnake live rats and fear he may get rabies from an infected one. Where may I get a vaccination for the snake? (Louisville)

41. Where can I buy a buffalo? (Cincinnati)

42. How can I renew a birth certificate? (Denver)

43. I would like to get a pamphlet from the Department of Agriculture called "Gals are Shapelier these Days." (Denver)

44. How can I buy a surplus tank to frolic around in the swamp with? (Miami)

45. How do I go about changing my sex? (Miami)

46. A woman called to find out how much she'd get from Civil Service when her husband finished dying. (Miami)

47. How many guest rooms are there in the White House? (Chicago)

48. Where do I complain about faulty weather reports? (Chicago)

49. I found a mouse in my frozen dinner; who do I call? (Oklahoma City)

50. Who is the oldest living human in the United States? The world? (Oklahoma City)

51. A man called to report he hadn't bathed in a week, and wanted to know where there was a public shower. (Kansas City)

52. A woman wanted to complain about a supersonic jet which flew over her house breaking both the sound barrier and her commode seat. (St. Petersburg)

53. How do I get rid of an alligator in my private lake? (St. Petersburg)

54. Where do I go to adopt Chilean children? (Salt Lake City)

55. How do I go about willing money to the United States? (San Diego)

56. Do you have a remedy for athletes foot? (Houston)

57. How many balloons will one tank of helium fill? (New Orleans)

58. A woman came to an FIC and reported she had been hired by the federal government but forgot where she was supposed to work. (New Orleans)

59. My wife is taking intervenous feedings. Her bottles are empty. Would you send me a few bottles? (New Orleans)

60. I need to talk to someone who can explain the devaluation of the dollar because a 10% surcharge was put on an item coming in from another country but which was purchased months ago before the devaluation of the dollar. (New Orleans)

APPENDIX B

WORDING OF SURVEY QUESTIONS

I. Surveys for 1964, 1966 and 1970

People like me don't have any say about what the government does.

Responses: Agree - Disagree

Voting is the only way that people like me have any say about how the government runs things.

Responses: Agree - Disagree

Sometimes politics and Government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's going on.

Responses: Agree - Disagree

I don't think public officials care much what people like me think.

Responses: Agree - Disagree

How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right--just about always, most of the time, or only some of the time?

Responses: Always - Most of the time - Some of the time - None of the time

Do you think that people in the government waste a lot of money we pay in taxes, waste some of it, or don't waste very much of it? (Not asked in 1966)

Responses: Not much - Some - A lot

APPENDIX A

Sample Dialogue Situations

1. Encounter for light and fire

People like me don't have any say over what the government does.

Protagonist: Jorge - Diagnosis

Starting is the only way that people like it have any say about how the government runs things.

Antagonist: Dylan - Diagnosis

Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's going on.

Protagonist: Dylan - Diagnosis

I don't think politics extends even much when people like me think.

Protagonist: Jorge - Diagnosis

Some small number out of the time." so only some of the government is capitalism to do with it right--just how much of the time do you think Democrats trust the time?

Antagonist: Alfredo - Part of the time - Some of the time - Some of the time

Maybe only small of it. That mixed in there)

Protagonist: Jorge - Some - A lot

II. Survey for 1968

Would you say that people like you have quite a lot of say about what the government does, or that you don't have much say at all?

Responses: Have a lot to say - Don't have much to say

Would you say that voting is the only way that people like you can have any say about the way the government runs things, or that there are lots of ways that you can have a say?

Responses: Lots of ways - Voting only way - No way to have a say

Would you say that politics and government are so complicated that people like you can't really understand what's going on, or that you can understand what's going on pretty well?

Responses: Can understand - Can't understand

Would you say that most public officials care quite a lot about what people like you think, or that they don't care much at all?

Responses: Care - Don't care

How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right--just about always, most of the time, or only some of the time?

Responses: Always - Most of the time - Some of the time - None of the time

Do you think that people in the government waste a lot of the money we pay in taxes, waste some of it, or don't waste very much of it?

Responses: Not much - Some - A lot

12. Bureau for Time

Interviewer: Does a lot to do with - time's been much
of an ally
Respondent: Some a lot to do with - time's been much
more much ally or will
have about what the government does, or that how don't
would how not one that people like how make quite a lot of

Interviewer: Lots of ways - waiting only ask - do
why do have a job
Respondent: Does a lot to do with - time's been much
more ally or will
time. Has not only ask ask about the way the government
could have a job?
Interviewer: Lots of ways - waiting only ask - do
what's doing at bureau will
crowd what's saying or, or that how one understand
unambiguous that people like how can't really under-
stand just not only this initiate and government do no

Interviewer: Can understand - can't understand
what's doing at bureau will
lot about what people like how think, or that they
would how not that ever public activity case quite a

Interviewer: Does - don't case
case's case much at will
lot about what people like how think, or that they
would how not that ever public activities case quite a

Interviewer: Simple - Most of the time - Some of
the time - Some of the time
time?
Interviewer: Simple - Most of the time - Some of
above simple. most of the time, or only some of the
government is thinking to do what is right--just
how much of the time do you think you can trust the
time?

Interviewer: Bit much - Some - A lot
don't waste very much at it?
of the money in the time. waste some of it. or
to how state that people in the government waste a lot

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